# **ALMA Visibility Calibration**

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This presentation/publication has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement No 730562 [RadioNet]. The delivered ALMA data consist of the amplitudes and phases for the combined signals from pairs of antennas. These are called visibility data.

The goal of visibility calibration is to make the following corrections to the visibility data:

- Correct phase variations versus frequency
- Correct amplitude variations versus frequency
- Correct phase variations versus time
- Correct amplitude variations versus time

These corrections are derived from up to three different calibration sources.

The archive is accessible at http://almascience.eso.org/aq/.

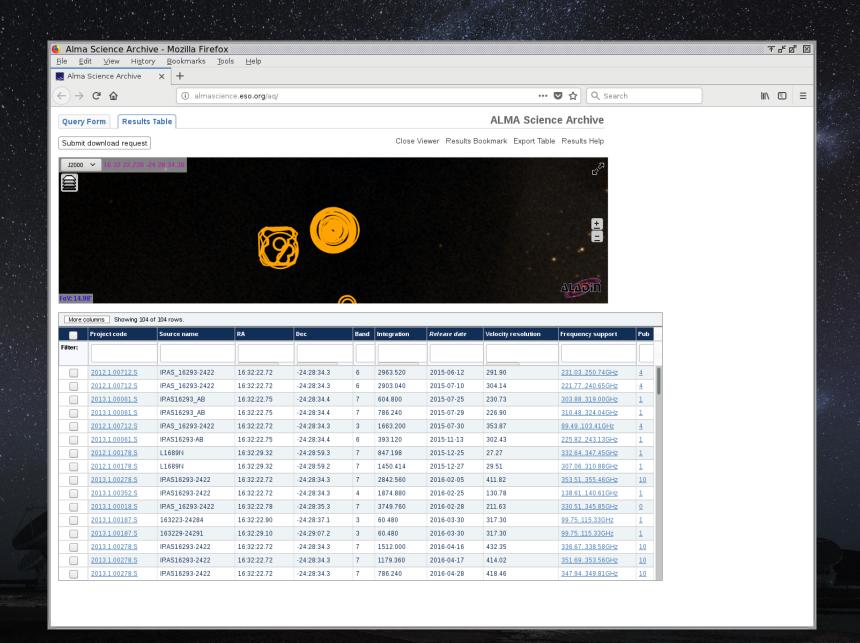
The web interface allows for multiple types of searches that will be shown in the next slide.

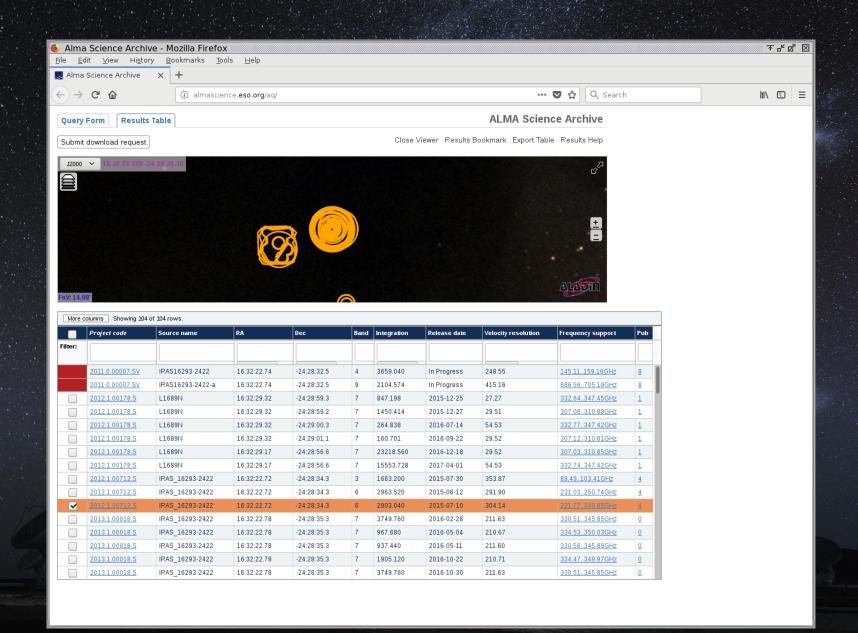
Data can be selected by individual Scheduling Blocks (SBs), which are observations with an individual array that achieve individual Science Goals.

The downloads come in tar format. The processed data as well as quality control and

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#### The SB that contain the example dataset come in three files:

2012.1.00712.S\_uid\_\_\_A002\_X609170\_X14c\_001\_of\_001.tar 2012.1.00712.S\_uid\_\_\_A002\_X7fb89e\_X6e1.asdm.sdm.tar 2012.1.00712.S\_uid\_\_\_A002\_X84187d\_X1347.asdm.sdm.tar

The first file contains the results from data processing and supporting files, including final images, logs, and quality assurance results.

The second and third files contain the raw data from individual Execution Blocks (EBs), which are self-contained observations.

This observations has two EBs (and a third semipass EB that did not pass quality assurance). For this tutorial, we will use the one ending in X6e1.

#### Directory structure after untarring files:

2012.1.00712.S science\_goal.uid\_\_\_A002\_x609170\_x14a group.uid\_\_\_A002\_x609170\_x14b member.uid\_\_\_A002\_x609170\_x14c calibration log product qa raw README script Directory contents:

calibration: Calibration plots and tables. log: Log files. product: Fully processed images. qa: Quality assurance data. raw: Raw data (ASDM format). **README:** Information from calibration and imaging as well as general file information. script: Data processing scripts.

Data downloaded from the archive can be reprocessed using the following command:

execfile('scriptForPI.py')

If the data were manually calibrated and imaged, these scripts will be available and can also be applied (after renaming some files).

If the data were pipeline-calibrated, executing scriptForPI.py is the fastest way to produce calibrated measurement sets.

If the data were pipeline-imaged, images are expected to be produced using scriptForPI.py.

ALMA and CASA data are stored in object oriented file systems, where a "file" is a directory that actually contains a series of ascii and binary files (some in subdirectories).

The scientific data in these datasets are the phases and amplitudes produced by the signals from pairs of antennas. These data are referred to as visibility data.

The raw ALMA data is in a format called ASDM.

To apply manual calibration scripts to data from the ALMA archive, it is usually necessary to rename the ASDM files to remove the ".asdm.sdm" suffix.

#### Contents of the example ASDM file:

AlmaRadiometer.xml Antenna.xml ASDMBinary/ ASDM.xml CalAmpli.xml CalAtmosphere.bin CalAtmosphere.xml CalCurve.xml CalCurve.xml CalData.xml CalDevice.xml CalPhase.xml CalPhase.xml CalPointing.xml CalReduction.xml CalSeeing.xml CalWVR.xml ConfigDescription.xml CorrelatorMode.xml DataDescription.xml ExecBlock.xml Feed.xml Field.xml Flag.xml FocusModel.xml Focus.xml Main.xml Pointing.bin PointingModel.xml Pointing.xml Polarization.xml Processor.xml Receiver.xml SBSummary.xml Scan.xml Source.xml SpectralWindow.xml State.xml Station.xml Subscan.xml SwitchCycle.xml SysCal.xml Weather.xml The calibration scripts we are using contain a series of steps. To execute individual step "N", enter the following commands into CASA:

mysteps=[N]
execfile('uid\_\_\_\_A002\_X7fb89e\_X6e1.ms.scriptForCalibration.py')

Multiple commands can be executed at once.

Not specifying anything will execute all of the commands.

The rest of this presentation describes each calibration step in more detail.

The data processing steps can be divided into three broad groups:

0-1: Data import2-8: A priori calibration9-19: Calibration

# **Step 0: Import of the ASDM**

The purpose of this step is to convert the data from its native ALMA format (the ASDM format) into a CASA measurement set format.

#### Contents of the example measurement set:

ANTENNA/ ASDM\_ANTENNA/ ASDM\_CALATMOSPHERE/ ASDM\_CALWVR/ ASDM\_CORRELATORMODE/ ASDM\_RECEIVER/ ASDM\_SBSUMMARY/ ASDM\_SBSUMMARY/ ASDM\_SOURCE/ ASDM\_STATION/ CALDEVICE/ DATA\_DESCRIPTION/ FEED/ FIELD/ FLAG\_CMD/ HISTORY/ OBSERVATION/ POINTING/ POLARIZATION/ PROCESSOR/ SOURCE/ SPECTRAL\_WINDOW/ STATE/ SYSCAL/ SYSPOWER/ table.dat table.f1 table.f10 table.f11 table.f12 table.f13 table.f14 table.f15 table.f16 table.f17asdmindex table.f18 table.f19 table.f2 table.f20 table.f20 table.f21\_TSM0 table.f21\_TSM1 table.f21\_TSM2 table.f21\_TSM3 table.f21\_TSM4 table.f22

table.f22\_TSM1
table.f22\_TSM2
table.f23
table.f23\_TSM1
table.f23\_TSM2
table.f3
table.f3
table.f4
table.f5
table.f6
table.f7
table.f8
table.f9
table.info
table.lock
WEATHER/

## **Step 1: Fix SYSCAL table times**

The system temperature (Tsys) measurements may include recording errors. Occasionally, multiple measurements have the same timestamp. This step corrects these errors.

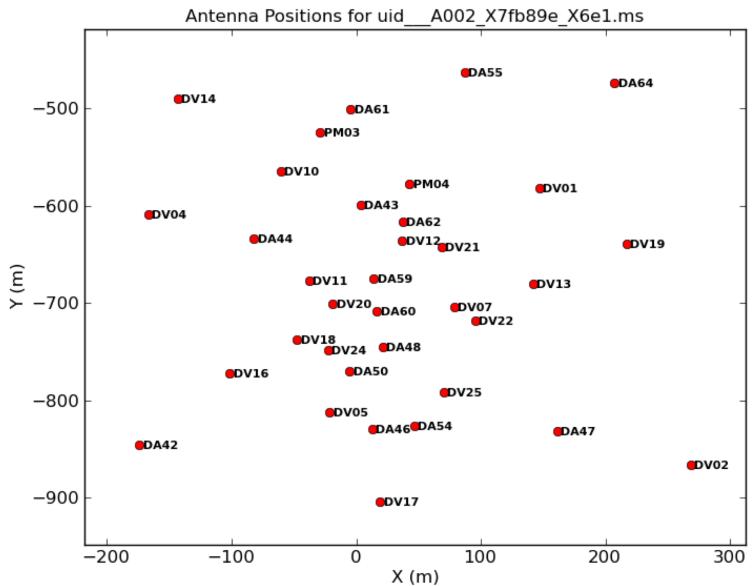
# **Step 2: Listobs**

The listobs command will list a large amount of information about the observations. We run this step again later in step 9, so we will look at the listobs file in more detail then. At this point in time, it would be useful to use plotants to produces a plot showing the locations of antennas in the array.

This is not included in standard calibration scripts, but it should be.

To execute this command, type the following:

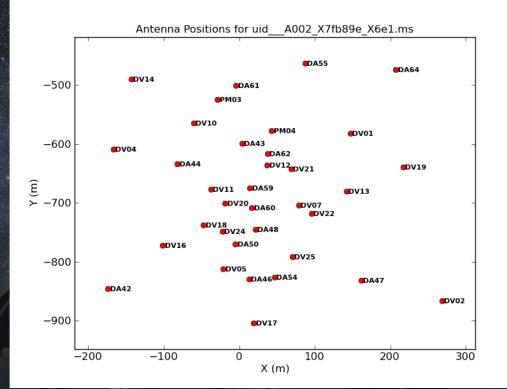
plotants(vis='uid\_\_\_\_A002\_X7fb89e\_X6e1.ms')



. .

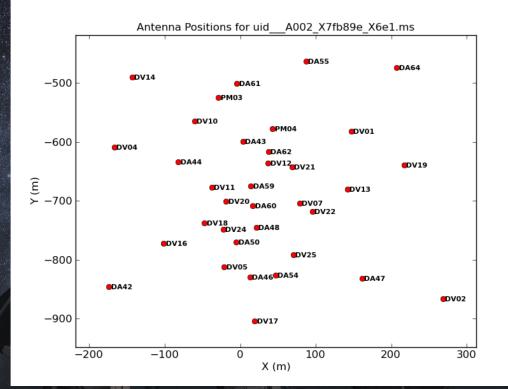
This plot can be used to select the reference antenna, which is used in many of the data processing steps.

The antenna needs to be from the centre of the array.



Antennas on long baselines will tend to produce noisier data than antennas on short baselines.

This figure can be used to diagnose these types of issues.



# Step 3: A priori flagging

Some of the data are either not useful or not needed for the rest of the calibration and can be discarded. This includes the following:

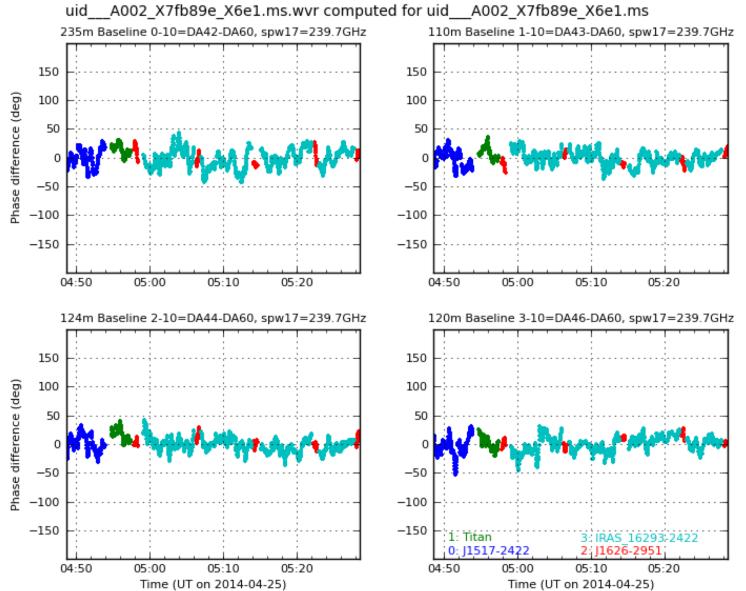
- Autocorrelated data
- Pointing and atmosphere measurements
- Data taken when the telescope is not ready for observing (for example, the telescope is slewing, etc)

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	ACD does not have the correct load in position						
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## **Step 4: Generation of the WVR calibration table**

The water vapour radiometers (WVRs) produce measurements of the water vapour content of the atmosphere that can be used to correct for phase variations related to this.

This steps generates calibration tables that correct the phases. The corrections are applied in step 7.

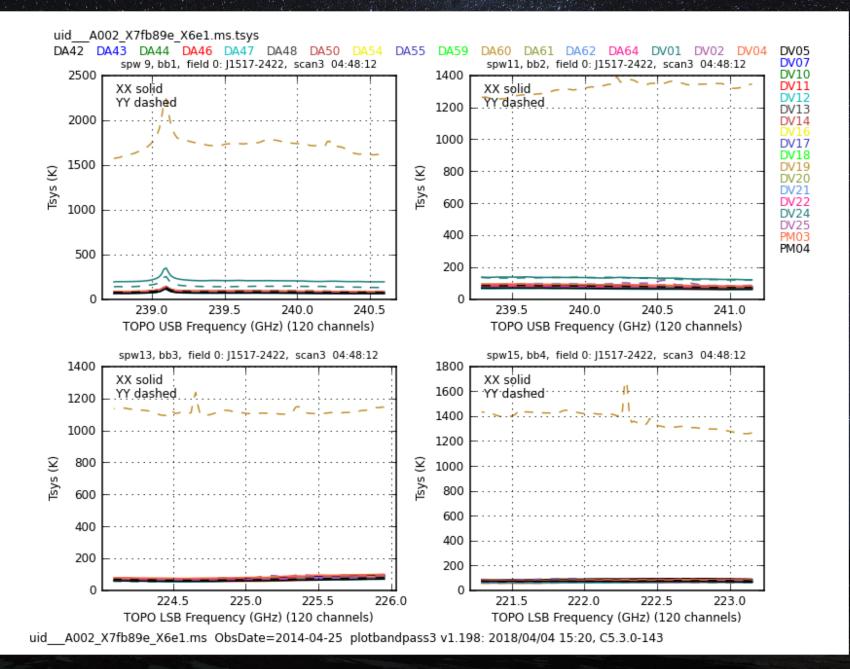


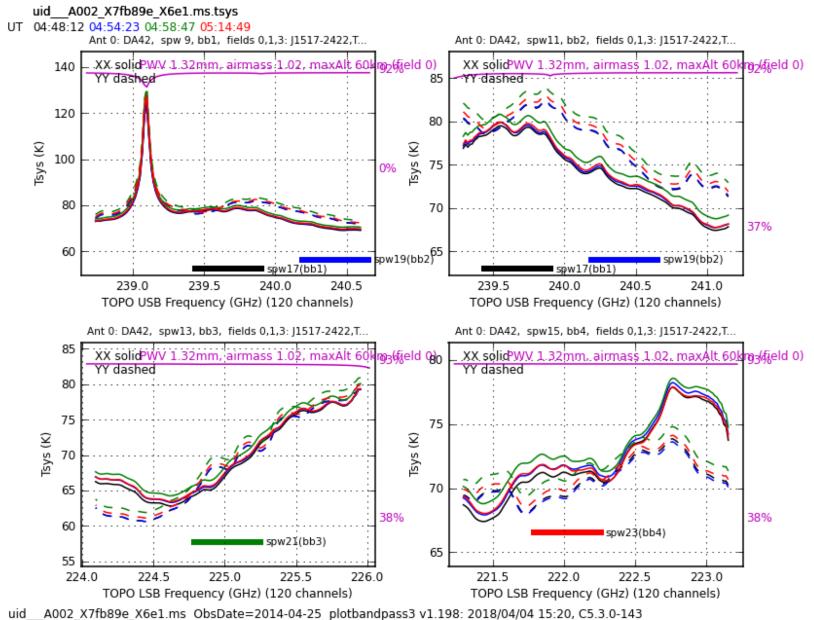
25)

### **Step 5: Generation of the Tsys calibration table**

The system temperature (Tsys) measurements include measurements of the emission from the atmosphere and telescope.

This steps generates calibration tables that correct the amplitudes based on the Tsys data. The corrections are applied in step 7.





# **Step 6: Generation of the antenna position calibration table**

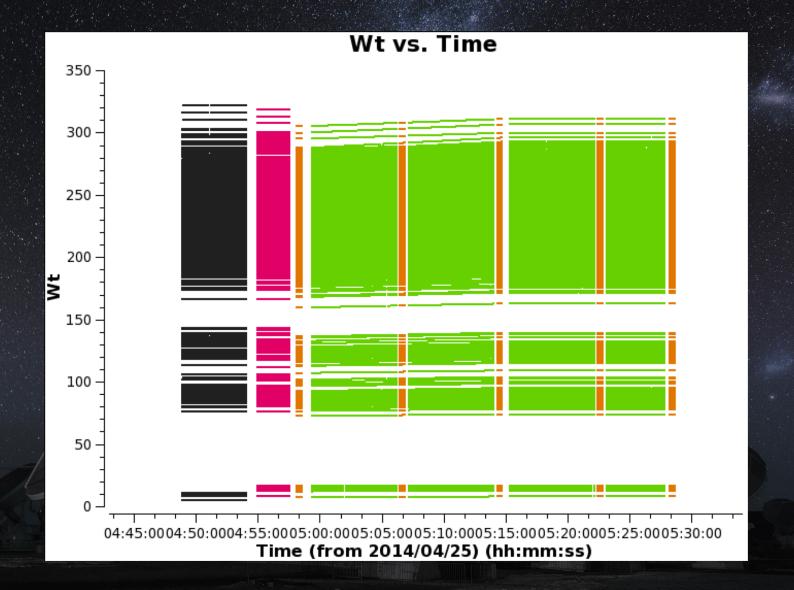
Corrections to antenna positions can be very important if the antennas are on long baselines. This step generates a calibration table that corrects the positions.

Sometimes, the corrections may be unnecessary. In this situation, a table filled with zeroes is created.

## **Step 7: Application of the WVR, Tsys, and antenna position calibration tables**

The tables generated in steps 4, 5, and 6 are applied in this step.

This step also generates a plot of the weights for the data (which are applied when final images are created).



### **Step 8: Split out science spws**

In this step, the data for the science and calibration sources is separated from the other data.

For the example dataset, the original measurement set included 25 spectral windows (spws), while the output from this step has only 4 spws.

This is the end of the a priori calibration.

## **Step 9: Listobs and save initial flags**

The listobs command will list a large amount of information about the observations, including the following:

- Basic observation information (PI, project ID, dates, etc)
- List of the sequence of observations performed
- List of the fields
- List of the spectral windows
- List of the sources (the spectral windows for each field)
- List of the antennas

The other part of this step saves data related to flagging. This is done several times throughout the script.

# **Step 10: Initial flagging**

Any data that look abnormally noisy or are that are otherwise unusable are flagged (identified as bad) in this step and not used in any subsequent steps.

Standard scripts include flagdata commands to flag shadowed antennas (antennas that are blocked by other antennas). Additional commands to flag end channels for time domain data (data with 2 GHz spws and 128 channels) are also typically included when needed. At this point, it is good to check the quality of the data with plotms, which can be run by typing this at the CASA command prompt.

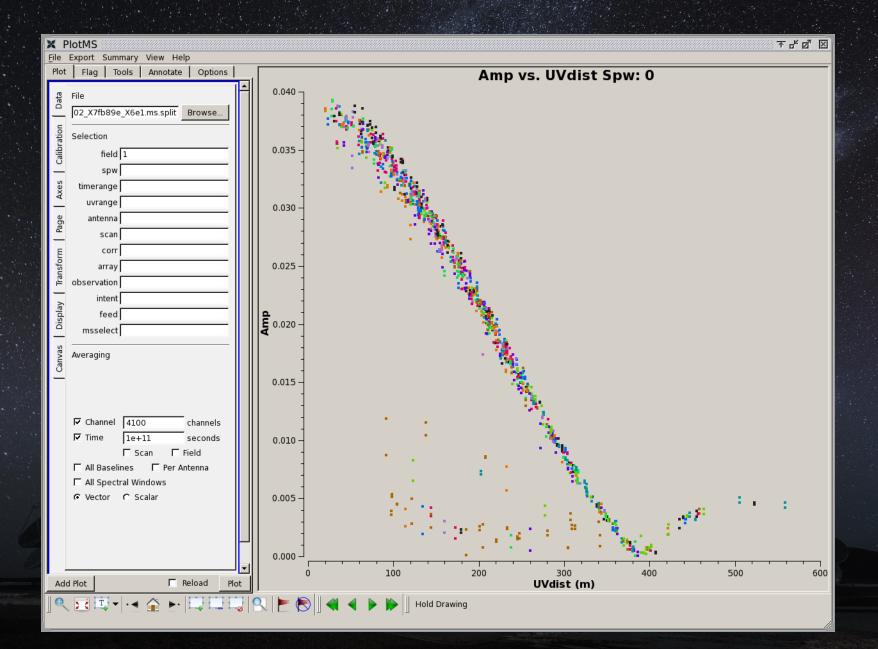
I recommend performing the following checks in the following order:

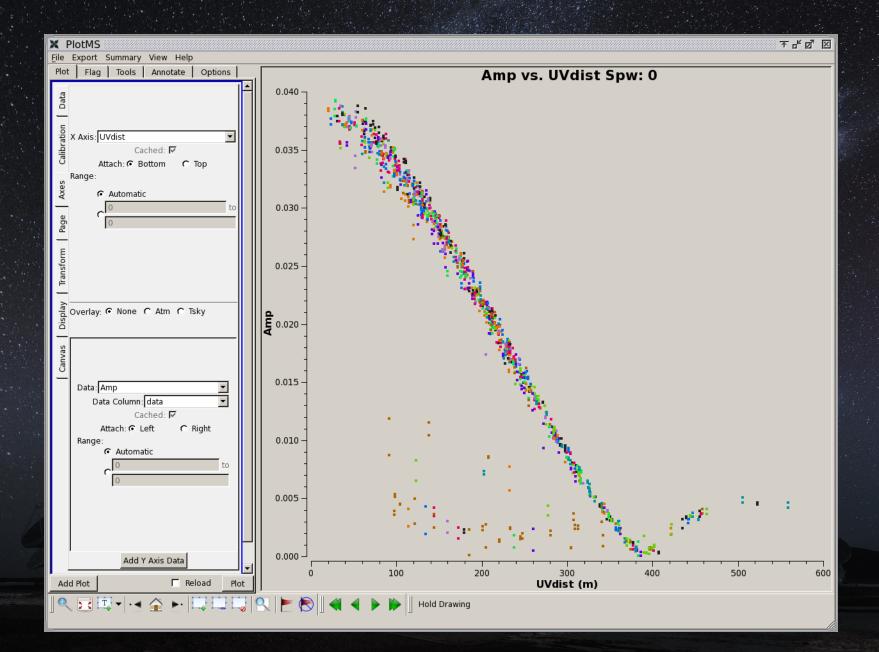
- Check amplitude versus uv distance for the amplitude or bandpass calibrator
- Check amplitude versus channel for the bandpass calibrator
- Check phase versus scan for the phase calibrator

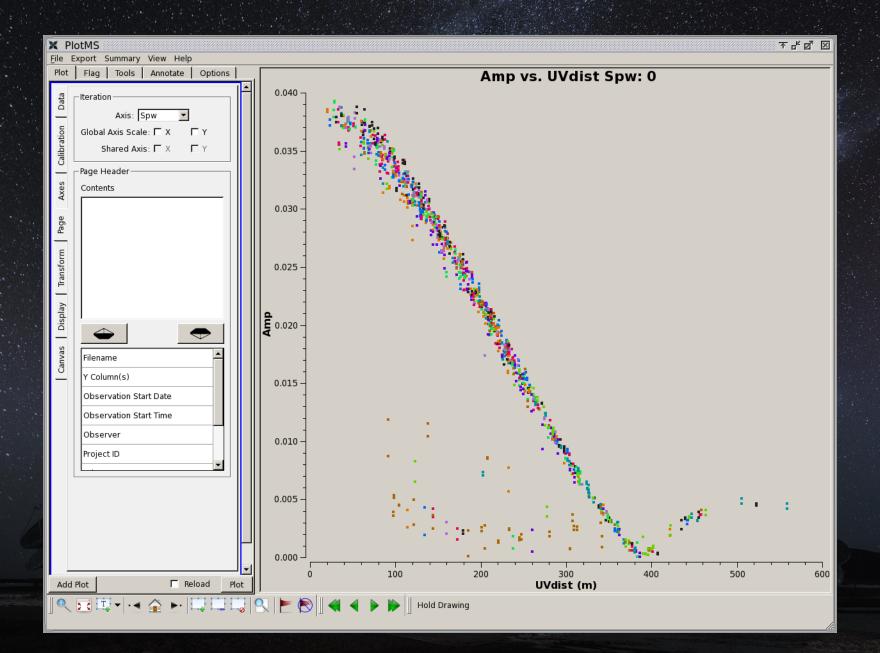
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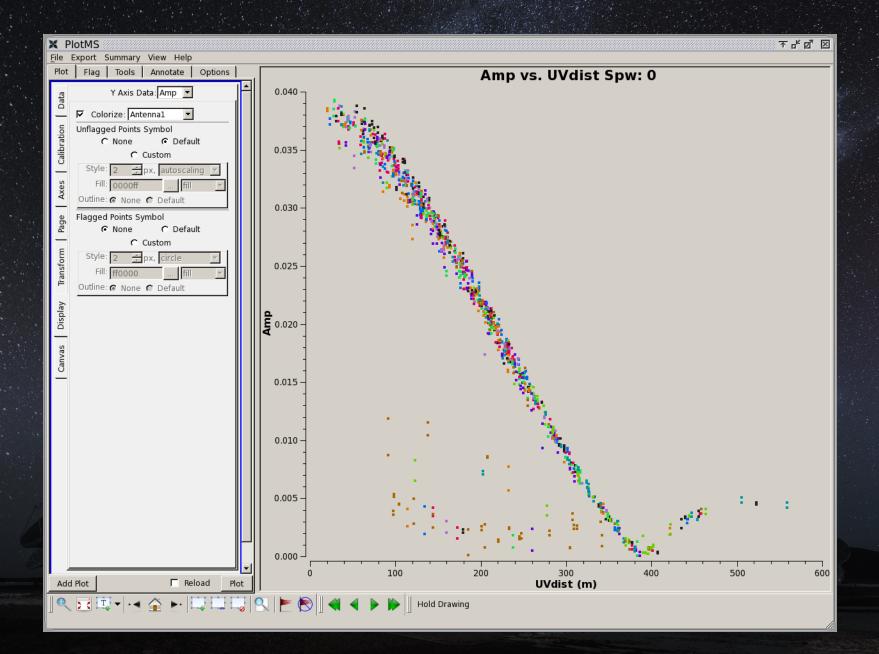
# To check *amplitude versus uv distance*, set the following:

- Under the Data tab:
  - Set the file to the ms.split file created in step 8
  - Set the field to the number of the amplitude calibrator
  - Set channel averaging to 4100
  - Set time averaging to 1e11
- Under the Axes tab:
  - Set the x-axis to UVdist
  - Set the y-axis to Amp
- Under the Page tab:
  - Set axis to Spw
- Under the Display tab:
  - Set Colorize to Antenna1



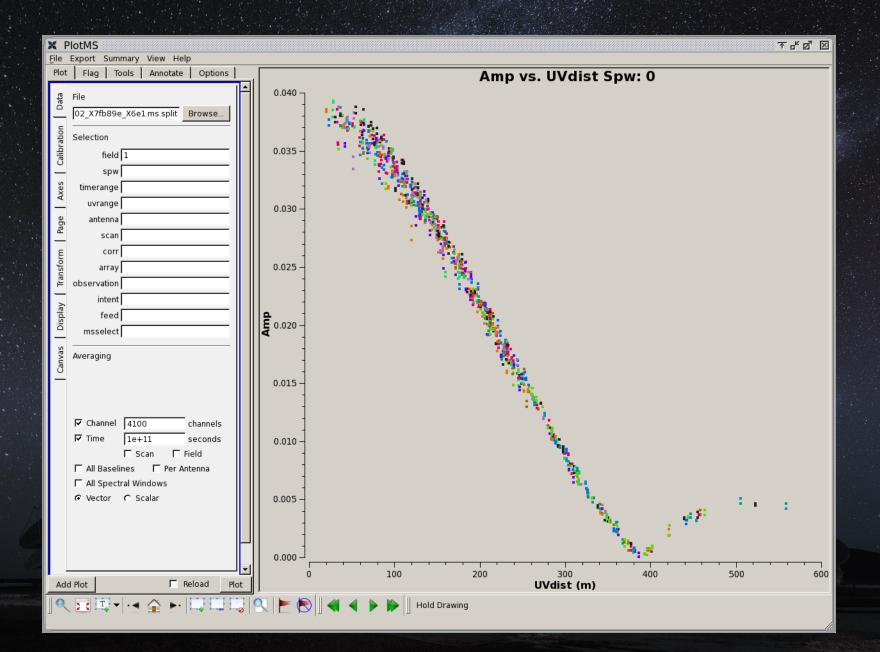






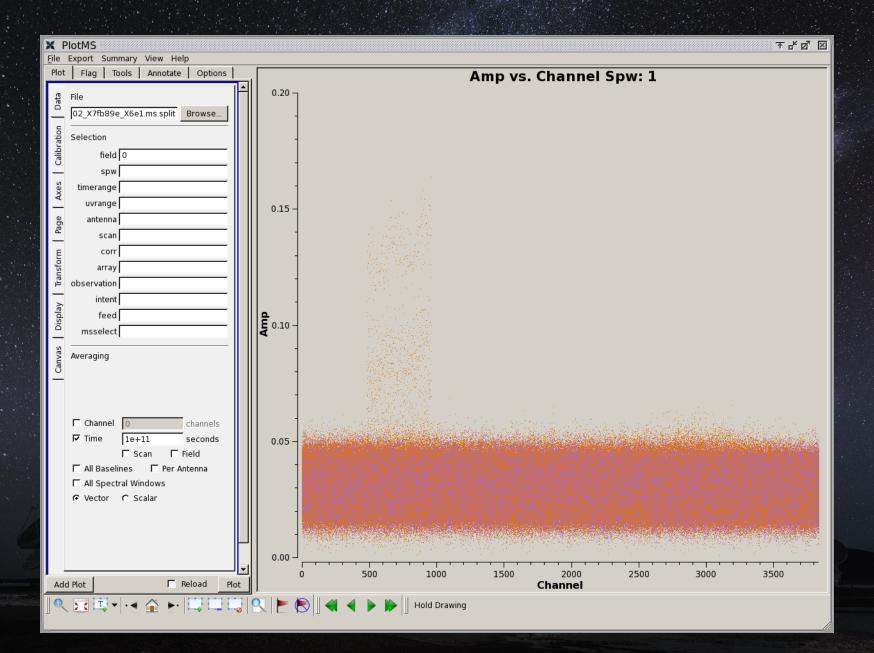
In the amplitude versus uv distance plots, most of the data should fall along a straight line (for unresolved or marginally resolved sources) or should follow something similar to a sinc<sup>2</sup> function (for resolved objects line Solar System objects).

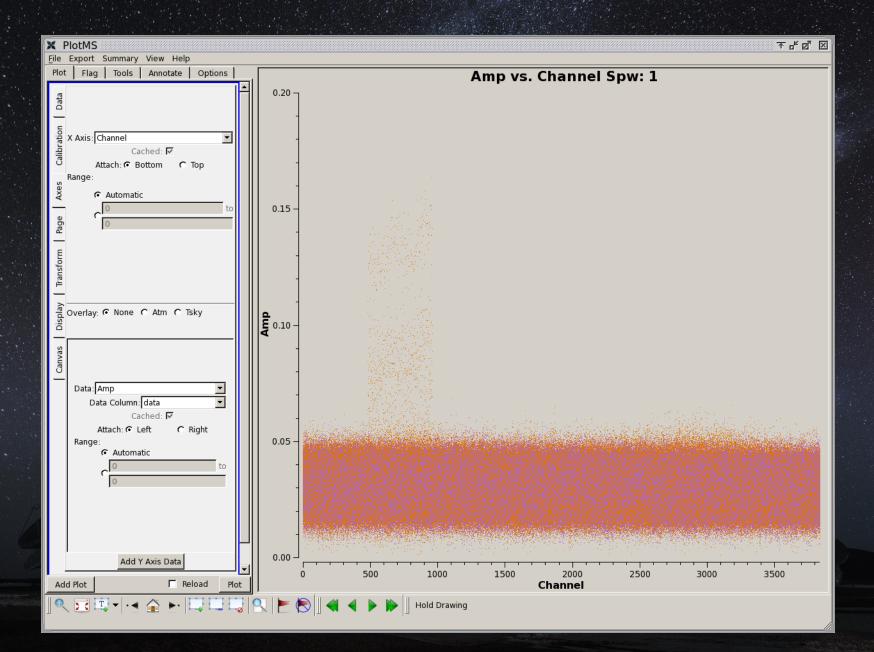
Data from bad antennas or baselines will appear as outliers from these trends.

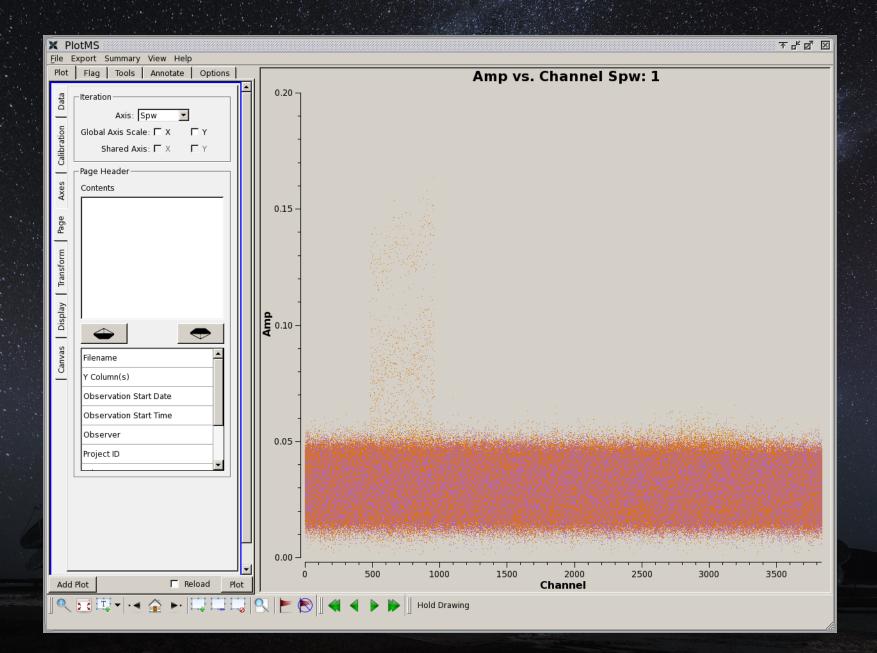


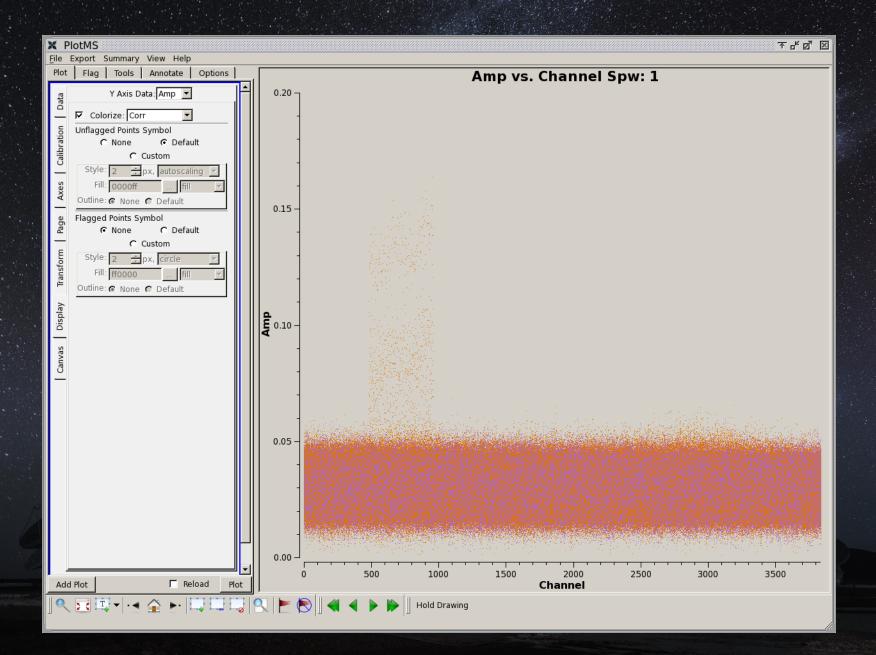
#### To check *amplitude versus channel*, set the following:

- Under the Data tab:
  - Set the file to the ms.split file created in step 8
  - Set the field to the number of the bandpass calibrator
  - Set time averaging to 1e11
- Under the Axes tab:
  - Set the x-axis to Channel
  - Set the y-axis to Amp
- Under the Page tab:
  - Set axis to Spw
- Under the Display tab:
  - Set Colorize to Corr (which will produce different colours for the XX and YY data)





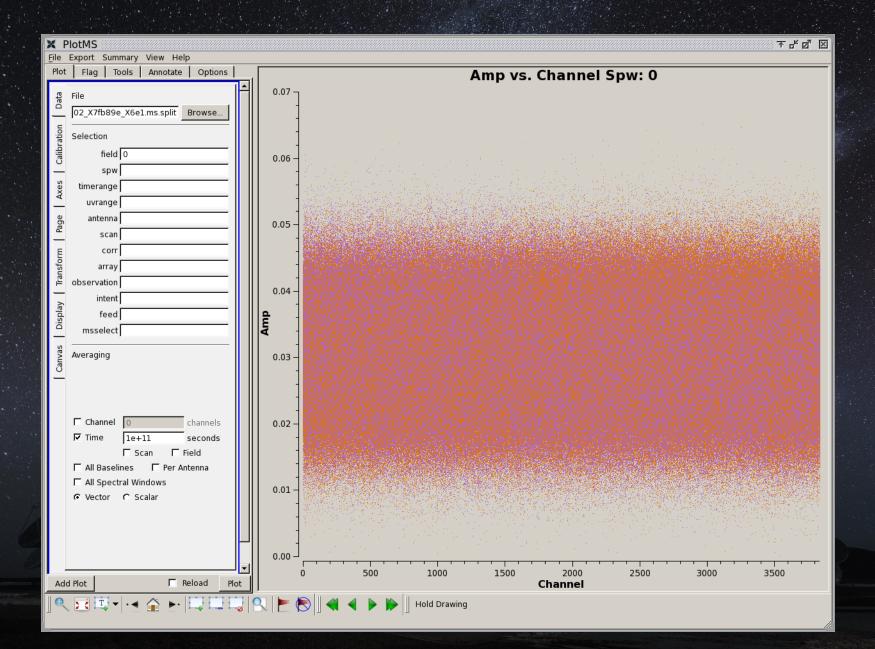




In the amplitude versus channel plots, most of the data should fall along a relatively straight line or should at least look smooth.

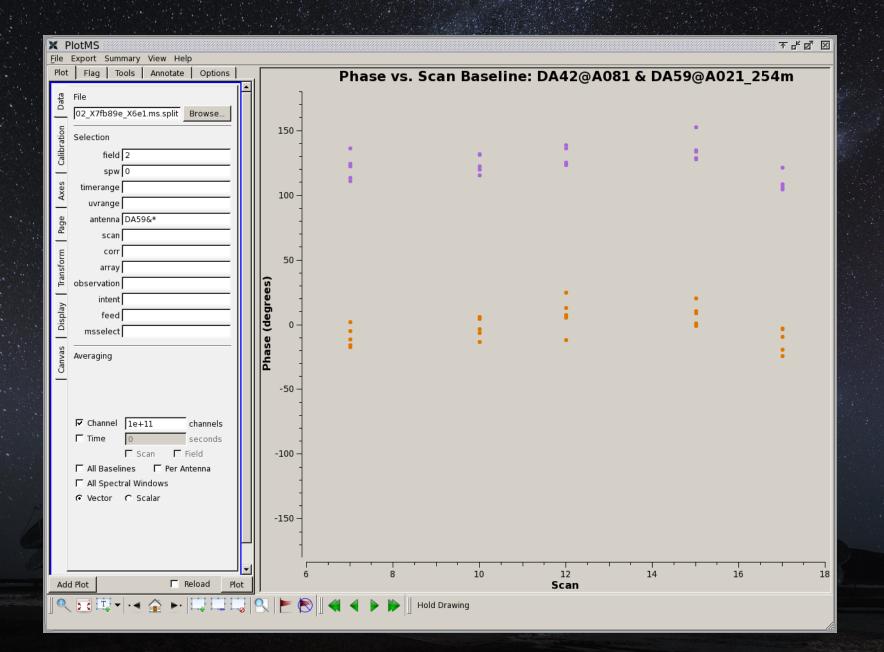
Data from the end channels will often appear either abnormally high or low. So will data from bad channels.

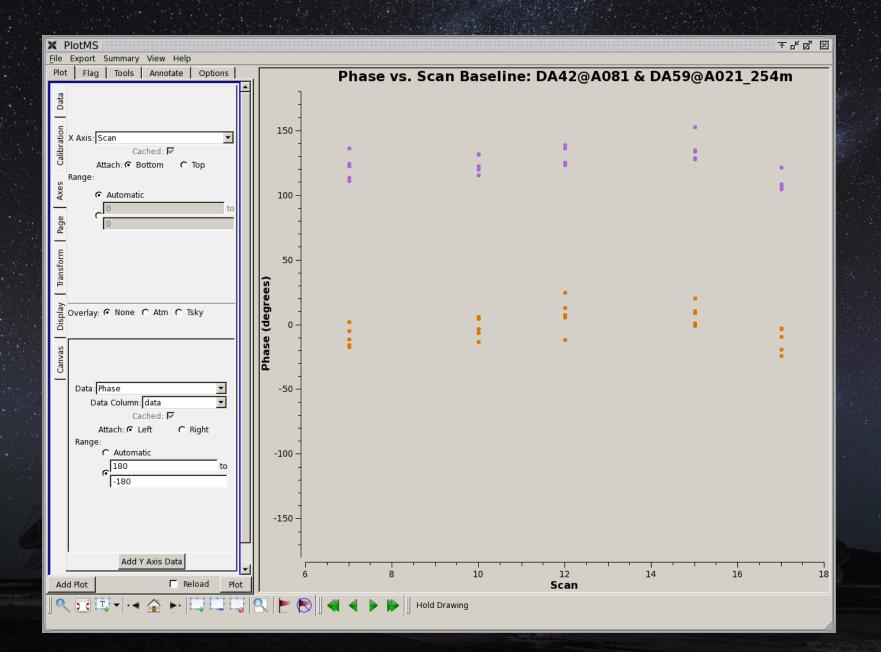
Additionally, atmospheric absorption features can be identified using these plots.

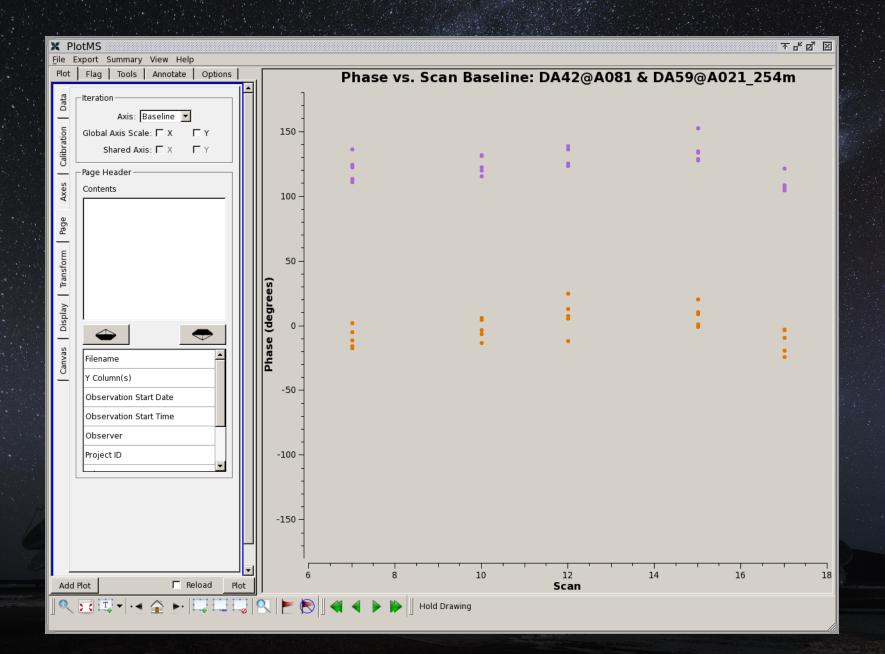


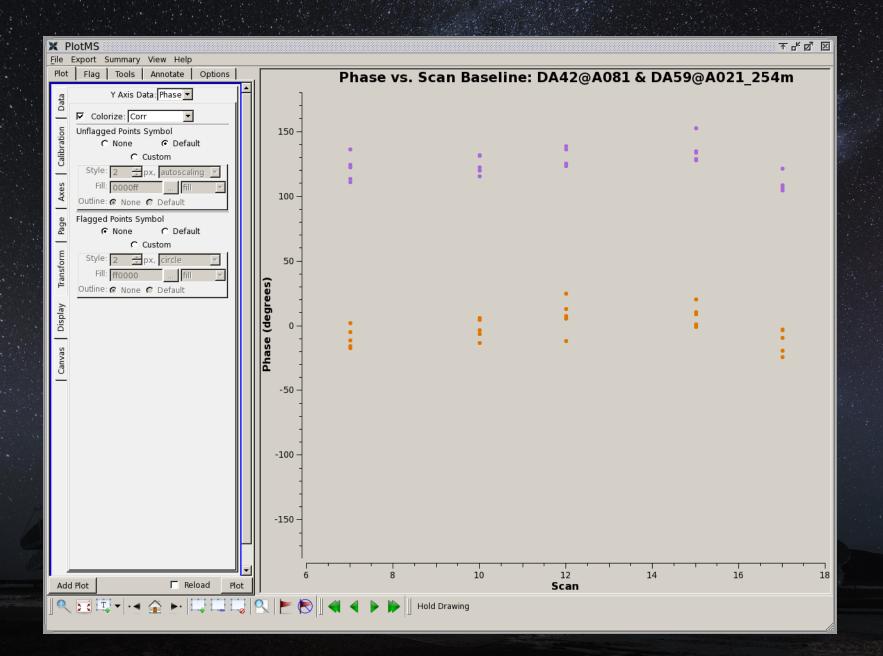
#### To check *phase versus scan*, set the following:

- Under the Data tab:
  - Set the file to the ms.split file created in step 8
  - Set the field to the number of the phase calibrator
  - Set the spw to one of the spw numbers (each one should be checked separately
  - Set the antenna to the reference antenna followed by "&\*''
  - Set channel averaging to 4100
- Under the Axes tab:
  - Set the x-axis to Scan
  - Set the y-axis to Phase and set the range to 180 to -180
- Under the Page tab:
  - Set axis to Baseline
- Under the Display tab:
  - Set Colorize to Corr (which will produce different colours for the XX and YY data)









In the phase versus scan plots, the phase data should look smooth enough that it appears possible to interpolate between the phase calibration observations.

Data from bad scans will show abnormal scatter. (The data will also appear to have a high scatter if you forget to set the range for the y-axis).

Gradual changes in phases are acceptable, but if the phases change significantly (for example more than ~120 degrees) between phase calibrator observations, it may be necessary to flag the data from the antenna or baseline.

# Step 11: Put a model for the flux calibrator into the measurement set

This step adds information indicating the flux density of one of the sources in the data (typically the amplitude calibrator, although a different source can be used if necessary).

Either a Solar System object or a quasar is used in this step.

The flux densities for Solar System objects are based on well-calibrated models (although the Ceres and Pallas models are suspect).

The quasar flux densities are based on a catalog of periodic measurements calibrated against Solar System objects.

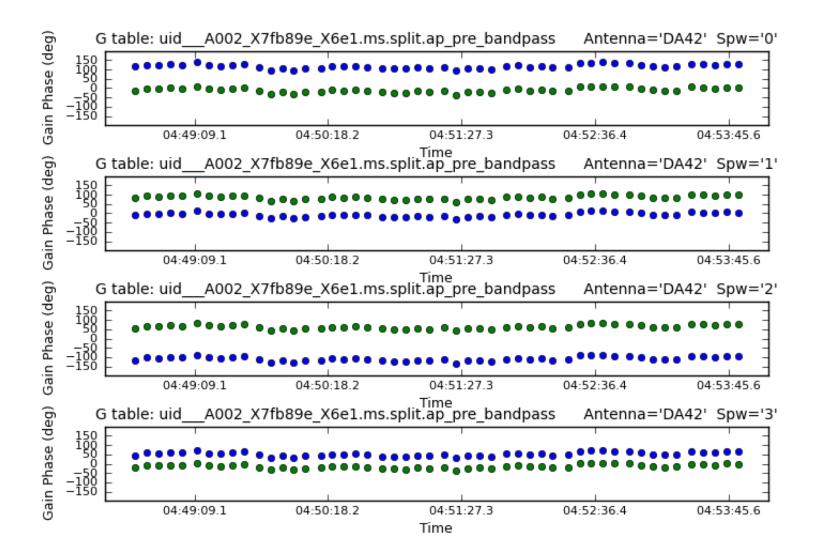
# **Step 12: Save flags**

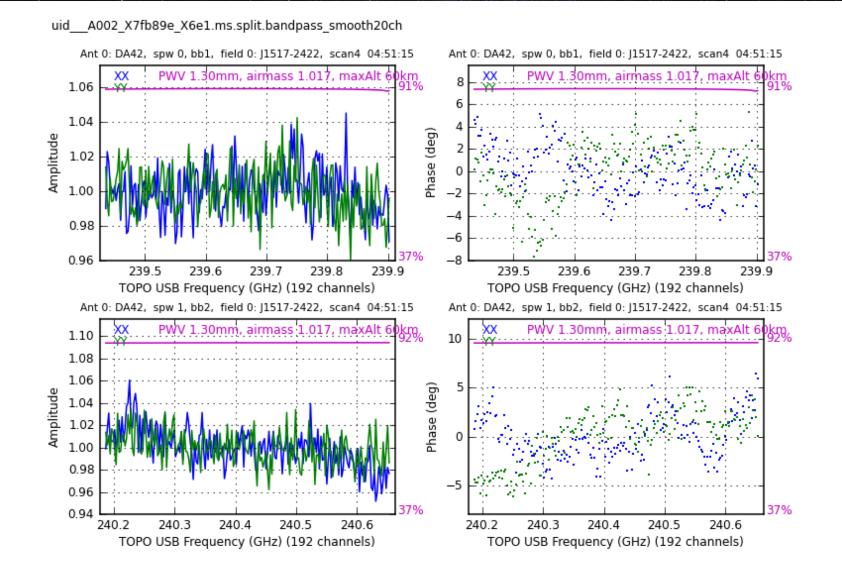
#### **Step 13: Bandpass calibrations**

In this step, variations in phase and amplitude versus channel are measured and stored in a bandpass calibration table.

The calibration source used for this is typically a very bright quasar with a featureless spectrum.

Before deriving the bandpass calibration, the phase variations versus time are measured in the bandpass calibration data.





uid\_\_\_A002\_X7fb89e\_X6e1.ms.split\_ObsDate=2014-04-25\_plotbandpass3 v1.198: 2018/04/04 15:20, C5.3.0-143

# **Step 14: Save flags**

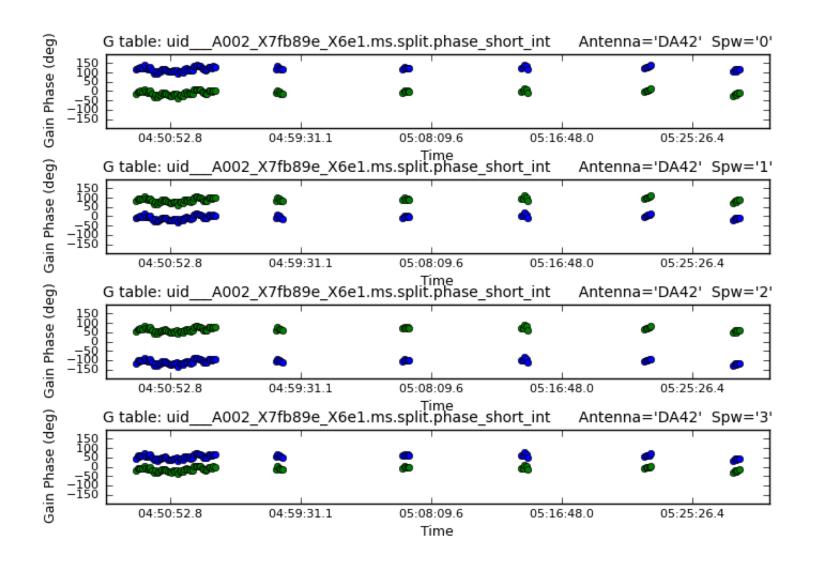
#### **Step 15: Gain calibrations**

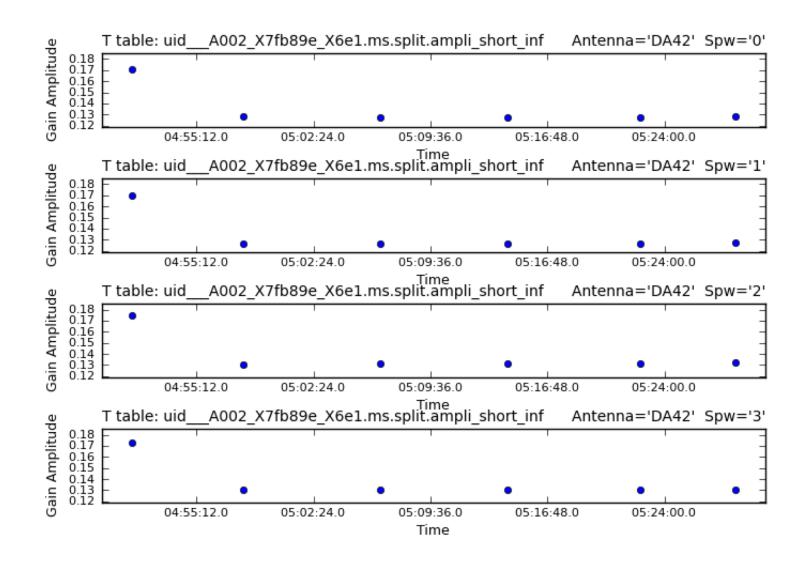
In this step, variations in phase and amplitude versus time are measured and stored in multiple calibration tables.

This step is complicated by the use of a resolved object as a flux calibrator. The Solar System object has more reliablymodelled fluxes, but the signal is not detected on some of the longer baselines.

To properly calibrate the data, the flux calibration for the phase calibrator needs to be derived using the short baselines data for the flux calibrator. After that, the phase and amplitude calibration versus time can be derived for the science fields. The first half of the steps used in this script are as follows:

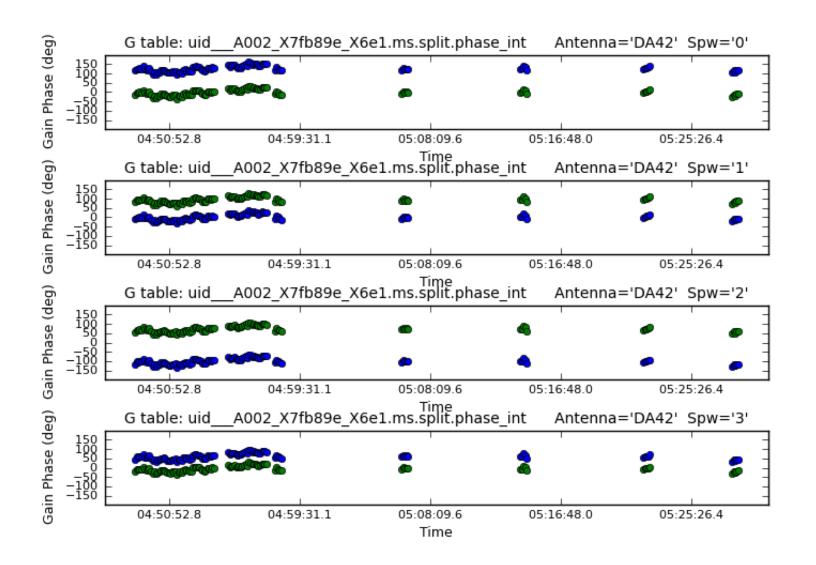
- The phase variations versus time are measured for every integration on short baselines
- The amplitude variations versus time are measured on short baselines
- The fluxes for the phase calibrator are rescaled using the amplitudes for the flux calibrator

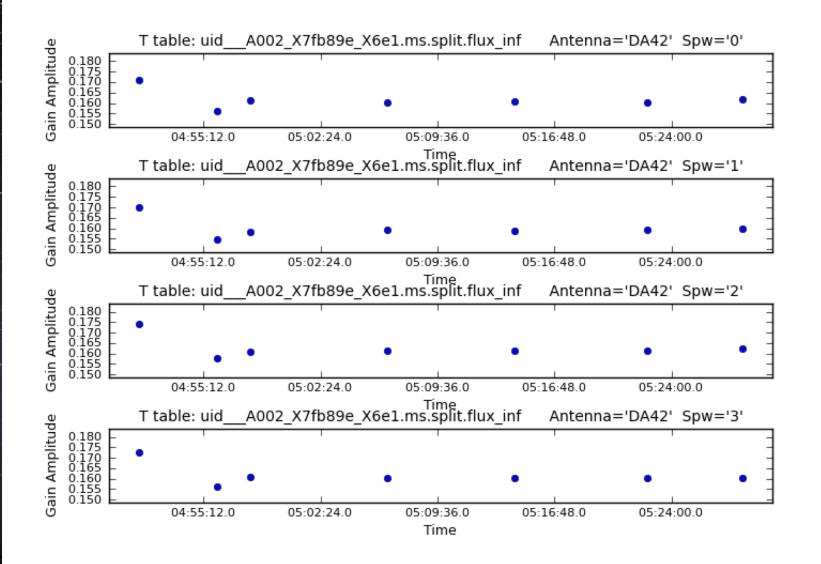


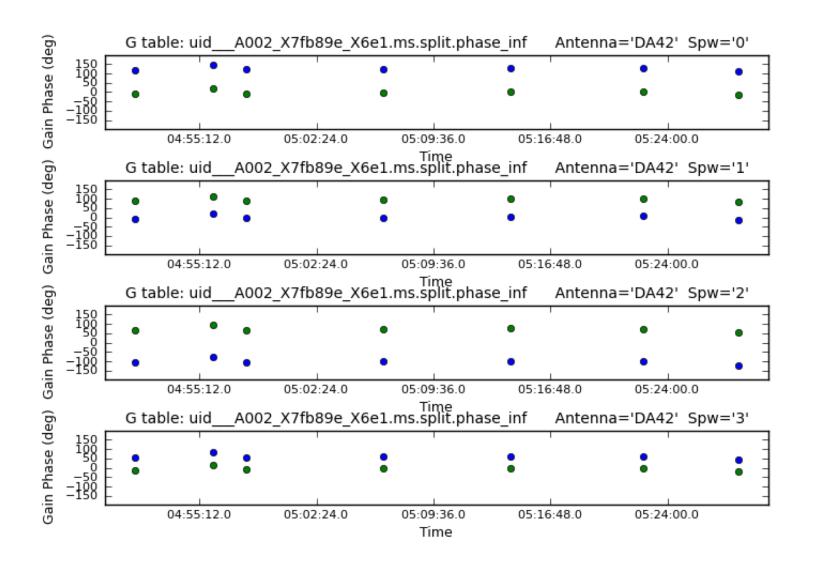


The second half of the steps used in this script are as follows:

- The phase variations versus time are measured for every integration
- The amplitude variations versus time are measured
- The phase variations versus time are measured by averaging over each scan







# **Step 16: Save flags**

# **Step 17: Application of the bandpass and gain calibration tables**

The tables generated in steps 13 and 15 are applied to the data.

#### Step 18: Split out the corrected column

The fully corrected data are separated from the rest of the data and put into a new measurement set.

# **Step 19: Save flags**