Infrared Sky Imager
Instrument Handbook

VR Morris

April 2016
DISCLAIMER

This report was prepared as an account of work sponsored by the U.S. Government. Neither the United States nor any agency thereof, nor any of their employees, makes any warranty, express or implied, or assumes any legal liability or responsibility for the accuracy, completeness, or usefulness of any information, apparatus, product, or process disclosed, or represents that its use would not infringe privately owned rights. Reference herein to any specific commercial product, process, or service by trade name, trademark, manufacturer, or otherwise, does not necessarily constitute or imply its endorsement, recommendation, or favoring by the U.S. Government or any agency thereof. The views and opinions of authors expressed herein do not necessarily state or reflect those of the U.S. Government or any agency thereof.
Infrared Sky Imager
Instrument Handbook

VR Morris, Pacific Northwest National Laboratory

April 2016

Work supported by the U.S. Department of Energy,
Office of Science, Office of Biological and Environmental Research
Contents

1.0 Instrument Title ........................................................................................................... 1
2.0 Mentor Contact Information ....................................................................................... 1
3.0 Vendor/Developer Contact Information .................................................................... 1
4.0 Instrument Description ............................................................................................... 1
5.0 Measurements Taken ................................................................................................. 1
6.0 Links to Definitions and Relevant Information ....................................................... 2
  6.1 Data Object Description ......................................................................................... 2
  6.2 Data Ordering ....................................................................................................... 3
  6.3 Data Plots ........................................................................................................... 3
  6.4 Data Quality ....................................................................................................... 3
  6.5 Instrument Mentor Monthly Summary ............................................................... 5
  6.6 Calibration Database ............................................................................................ 5
7.0 Technical Specification ............................................................................................. 5
  7.1 Units ................................................................................................................... 5
  7.2 Range ................................................................................................................ 5
  7.3 Accuracy ........................................................................................................... 6
  7.4 Sensitivity .......................................................................................................... 6
  7.5 Uncertainty ....................................................................................................... 6
  7.6 Input Voltage ................................................................................................... 6
  7.7 Input Current .................................................................................................... 6
  7.8 Input Values ..................................................................................................... 6
  7.9 Output Values .................................................................................................. 6
8.0 Instrument System Functional Diagram .................................................................... 7
9.0 Instrument/Measurement Theory ............................................................................. 7
10.0 Setup and Operation of Instrument ......................................................................... 8
  10.1 Installation ....................................................................................................... 8
11.0 Software .................................................................................................................. 8
  11.0 Onboard System Computer and System Electronics ........................................ 8
  11.1 User Interface .................................................................................................. 9
  11.2 Data Acquisition and Analysis Architecture .................................................... 9
  11.3 Data Processing and Analysis ....................................................................... 9
12.0 Calibration .............................................................................................................. 9
13.0 Maintenance .......................................................................................................... 10
14.0 Safety 10
15.0 Citable References............................................................................................................. 10

Figures

1. A block diagram of the IRSI and its primary components...................................................... 7

Tables

1. Primary variables.................................................................................................................. 2
2. Secondary variables............................................................................................................. 3
3. Diagnostic variables.............................................................................................................. 3
4. Dimension variables............................................................................................................ 3
5. Data quality flags................................................................................................................ 4
6. Data quality thresholds. ....................................................................................................... 4
1.0 Instrument Title

Infrared Sky Imager. More information is available at the manufacturer’s website.

2.0 Mentor Contact Information

Victor Morris
Pacific Northwest National Laboratory
P.O. Box 999, MS K9-24
Richland, WA 99352
Phone: 509-372-6144
Fax: 509-375-6448
E-mail: vic.morris@arm.gov

3.0 Vendor/Developer Contact Information

Solmirus Corporation
1044 Elkton Drive
Colorado Springs, CO 80907
719.359.8798
www.solmirus.com
info@solmirus.com

4.0 Instrument Description

The Infrared Sky Imager (IRSI) deployed at the Atmospheric Radiation Measurement (ARM) Climate Research Facility is a Solmirus Corp. All Sky Infrared Visible Analyzer. The IRSI is an automatic, continuously operating, digital imaging and software system designed to capture hemispheric sky images and provide time series retrievals of fractional sky cover during both the day and night. The instrument provides diurnal, radiometrically calibrated sky imagery in the mid-infrared atmospheric window and imagery in the visible wavelengths for cloud retrievals during daylight hours. The software automatically identifies cloudy and clear regions at user-defined intervals and calculates fractional sky cover, providing a real-time display of sky conditions.

5.0 Measurements Taken

The IRSI’s primary function is to provide radiometrically calibrated imagery in the mid-infrared atmospheric window from 8-13 microns (μm). Available data products include the following:

- All-sky (180-degree field-of-view) radiometrically calibrated images
- Hemispheric cloud fraction determination
- Visible/IR image correlation
- Cloud/no cloud reporting
- Photometric quality assessment
- Sky opacity/transmission determination
- Water vapor determination
- Sky/cloud temperature (brightness and color) and emissivity measurements.

### 6.0 Links to Definitions and Relevant Information

See the [ARM Glossary](#).

#### 6.1 Data Object Description

The IRSI produces the following [datastreams]:

- `irsiir` – fractional sky cover, infrared
- `irsiirsimage` – hemispheric sky image (JPEG), infrared
- `irsiircldmask` – processed fractional sky cover image (PNG), infrared
- `irsisiv` – fractional sky cover, visible
- `irsisivissimage` – hemispheric sky image (JPEG), visible
- `irsisiviscldmask` – processed fractional sky cover image (PNG), visible

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable Name</th>
<th>Quantity Measured</th>
<th>Unit</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><code>sky_cover_high_emission_narrow</code></td>
<td>High emission sky cover for narrow field of view</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><code>sky_cover_low_emission_narrow</code></td>
<td>Low emission sky cover for narrow field of view</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><code>sky_cover_high_emission_wide</code></td>
<td>High emission sky cover for wide field of view</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><code>sky_cover_low_emission_wide</code></td>
<td>Low emission sky cover for wide field of view</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><code>sky_coverOpaque_narrow</code></td>
<td>Opaque sky cover for narrow field of view</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><code>sky_coverThin_narrow</code></td>
<td>Thin sky cover for narrow field of view</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><code>sky_coverOpaque_wide</code></td>
<td>Opaque sky cover for wide field of view</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><code>sky_coverThin_wide</code></td>
<td>Thin sky cover for wide field of view</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><code>precipitable_water_vapor</code></td>
<td>Precipitable water vapor</td>
<td>mm</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 2. Secondary variables.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable Name</th>
<th>Quantity Measured</th>
<th>Unit</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>time</td>
<td>Time offset from midnight</td>
<td>seconds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>reference_bb_temperature_1</td>
<td>Reference black body temperature, sensor 1</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>reference_bb_temperature_2</td>
<td>Reference black body temperature, sensor 2</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>reference_bb_temperature_3</td>
<td>Reference black body temperature, sensor 3</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>external_bb_temperature_1</td>
<td>External black body temperature, sensor 1</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>external_bb_temperature_2</td>
<td>External black body temperature, sensor 2</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>external_bb_temperature_3</td>
<td>External black body temperature, sensor 3</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3. Diagnostic variables.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable Name</th>
<th>Quantity Measured</th>
<th>Unit</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>time_offset</td>
<td>Time offset from base_time</td>
<td>seconds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>enclosure_temperature</td>
<td>Enclosure temperature</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>camera_temperature</td>
<td>Camera temperature</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>blackbody_radiance</td>
<td>Black body radiance</td>
<td>W/(m^2 sr)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4. Dimension variables.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable Name</th>
<th>Quantity Measured</th>
<th>Unit</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>base_time</td>
<td>base time in Epoch</td>
<td>seconds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lat</td>
<td>north latitude</td>
<td>degrees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lon</td>
<td>east longitude</td>
<td>degrees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>alt</td>
<td>altitude</td>
<td>meters above Mean Sea Level</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

6.2 Data Ordering

The IRSI data are available from the [ARM Data Archive](https://arm-dc.ornl.gov/). [ARM Data Archive](https://arm-dc.ornl.gov/)

6.3 Data Plots

Available [data plots and other data products](https://arm-dc.ornl.gov/).

6.4 Data Quality

Most fields contain a corresponding, sample-by-sample, automated quality check field in the b1 level datastreams. These flags are named `qc_<fieldname>`. For example, the `sky_cover_thin_wide` field also has a companion `qc_sky_cover_thin_wide` field. Possible values for each sample of the `qc_<fieldname>` are shown in the table below.
Table 5. Data quality flags.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Value</th>
<th>Definition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>All QC checks passed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Sample contained ‘missing data’ value</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Sample was less than prescribed minimum value</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Sample failed both ‘missing data’ and minimum value checks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Sample greater than prescribed maximum value</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Sample failed both minimum and maximum value checks (highly unlikely)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Sample failed minimum, maximum, and missing value checks (highly unlikely)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Sample failed delta check (change between this sample and previous sample exceeds a prescribed value)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Sample failed delta and missing data checks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Sample failed minimum and delta checks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Sample failed minimum, delta, and missing value checks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Sample failed maximum and delta checks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Sample failed minimum, maximum, and delta checks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Sample failed minimum, maximum, delta, and missing value checks</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The minimum and maximum thresholds are currently defined as follows for datastream ceil:

Table 6. Data quality thresholds.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Field Name</th>
<th>Units</th>
<th>Min</th>
<th>Max</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>sky_cover_high_emission_narrow</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sky_cover_low_emission_narrow</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sky_cover_high_emission_wide</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sky_cover_low_emission_wide</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sky_cover_opaque_narrow</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sky_cover_thin_narrow</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sky_cover_opaque_wide</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sky_cover_thin_wide</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>reference_bb_temperature_1</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>-20</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>reference_bb_temperature_2</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>-20</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>reference_bb_temperature_3</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>-20</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>external_bb_temperature_1</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>-20</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>external_bb_temperature_2</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>-20</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>external_bb_temperature_3</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>-20</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>enclosure_temperature</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>camera_temperature</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
6.5 Instrument Mentor Monthly Summary

See the Instrument Mentor Monthly Summary (IMMS) Reporting System.

6.6 Calibration Database

See the Operations Status System Common Calibration Database (CCDB).

7.0 Technical Specification

The infrared subsystem includes a 644×512 uncooled microbolometer array sensitive to 8-14 µm radiation, a 180-degree (all sky), custom-designed, hard-carbon-coated, waterproof lens, and an eight-position filter wheel for use with 1-inch filters. The IRSI also includes a visible subsystem consisting of a 4-megapixel monochrome cooled CCD detector coupled with a 180-degree, high-quality lens. An optional eight-position filter wheel for use with 1-inch filters is also available. Both infrared (IR) and Visible imaging subsystems use automated-focusing subsystems that allow the focus position to be adjusted from one filter position to the next.

Infrared subsystem:
- Detector: Uncooled microbolometer
- Wavelength range: 8-14 µm
- Filters: 10-12 µm (sky cover, brightness temperature) and 8-9 µm (color temperature and PWV)
- Image resolution: 640 × 512 pixel, 14-bit
- Field of view: 180°

Visible subsystem:
- Detector: Interline cooled CCD (color) with electronic and mechanical shutter
- Filters: Neutral density ×10-2 and ×10-4
- Image resolution: 3296 × 2472 pixel, 16-bit per color
- Field of view: 180°

7.0 Units

See Table 1, Table 2, and Table 3.

7.1 Range

The images have a hemispheric field of view, centered on zenith.
7.2 Accuracy

Absolute radiometric accuracy has been measured in the laboratory to be ±0.2 W/m²-μm-sr for typical sky radiances.

7.3 Repeatability

Unknown.

7.4 Sensitivity

The radiometric accuracy equates to a sensitivity of ±1.4°C for temperatures near 25°C. Pixel-to-pixel sensitivity of <0.01 W/m²-sr-μm (<0.07°C) is also achieved.

7.5 Uncertainty

Unknown.

7.6 Input Voltage

The power supply is 115 VAC, ±10%.

7.7 Input Current

The power consumption is 500 W maximum, with heating.

7.8 Input Values

Unknown.

7.9 Output Values

See Table 1, Table 2, and Table 3.
8.0 Instrument System Functional Diagram

Figure 1. A block diagram of the IRSI and its primary components.

9.0 Instrument/Measurement Theory

The IRSI’s primary function is to provide radiometrically calibrated imagery in the mid-infrared atmospheric window from 8-13 μm. Solmirus offers two custom filters for the IRSI that operate in this spectral interval. The 10.2-12.2 μm filter optimizes cloud/clear-sky contrast and is the primary filter used to determine fractional sky cover. The 8.1-9.2 μm filter is used in conjunction with the 10.2-12.2 μm filter to provide color temperature information as well as addition information in determining precipitable water vapor (PWV). The instrument response is the product of the filter transmission, lens transmission, and the nominal detector response. This data is used in image analysis and calibration procedures. The ARM IRSI was configured with the following IR filter set:

- Filter 1: Solmirus’ custom 10.2-12.2 micron filter
- Filter 2: Solmirus’ custom 8-9.5 micron filter
- Filter 3: Blocked
- Filter 4-8: Open

The visible color CCD detector was configured with the following filters:

- Filter 1: Open
- Filter 2: Neutral density filter with attenuation of 100
Filter 3: Neutral density filter with attenuation of 10,000
Filter 4: Blocked
Filter 5-8: Open

The infrared and visible imagers use automated focusing systems that allow the focal position to be adjusted from one filter position to the next.

10.0 Setup and Operation of Instrument

10.0 Installation

Installation of the IRSI instrument is a simple procedure. The instrument should be mounted on a level 24-inch x 24-inch platform using four ½-inch bolts positioned at the corners of the IRSI base on 22-inch centers. It is recommended that the enclosure access door be directed to the south (for Northern Hemisphere installations) so that the external blackbody reference is situated to the north. This is not critical because the infrared and visible cameras can be rotated internally, accommodating any orientation on the sky. A more important criterion is to minimize any unwanted obstructions in the IRSI’s 180-degree field of view.

The IRSI requires only two external connections: power (115V-230V) and fiber optic (Multi-mode SC-connector) that connects the onboard system computer to the external network.

10.1 Operations:

Boot the onboard system computer by switching the main power breaker located inside the IRSI enclosure to the “on” position. Allow several minutes for the system to boot. IRSI automatically enters its default mode of operations and remains on indefinitely.

To access control of the IRSI instrument, simply launch a web browser user interface (web-UI) by going to IP address (http://198.124.98.50/) of the instrument.

11.0 Software

11.0 Onboard System Computer and System Electronics

The system control computer is the data collection and data processing subsystem that resides within the IRSI instrument, retrieves data from the imaging subsystems, and performs on-the-fly data product analysis. It serves as the primary control mechanism for the IRSI instrument (i.e., imaging subsystems and other subsystems such as the hatch motor, filter wheels, focuser, and temperature meters and sensors) and provides data display and interfacing functions.
11.1 User Interface

The web-UI is accessed by going to the IP address http://198.124.98.50/ in a browser window that has access to the local network.

11.2 Data Acquisition and Analysis Architecture

Images are acquired in batches, which comprise a user-defined data acquisition sequence. The following list describes the acquisition sequence of the ARM IRSI.

1) Each data acquisition sequence is 30 seconds in length and begins with the hatch closed.

2) An IR blackbody reference image is acquired in each of the two infrared filters as well as visible dark reference image taken at the user-defined exposure time for the visible filter.

3) The hatch is then opened wherein IR sky images are acquired in each of the two IR filters.

4) A visible sky image is acquired in each at the selected exposure time.

5) When all sky images have been acquired, the hatch is closed and the system waits for the start of the next 30-second interval.

All quantitative image data are ultimately stored in Flexible Image Transport System (FITS) format; a lossless image format that also incorporates a header in which all pertinent metadata associated with the image is stored.

11.3 Data Processing and Analysis

Data products are then constructed from the acquired data using a Process Program written in Interactive Data Language (IDL) running on the IRSI’s system computer. These data products are archived to the hard drive.

12.0 Calibration

Absolute radiance calibration is attained using Solmirus’ innovative hatch design, which incorporates a blackbody reference with embedded temperature sensors and a heater. This allows the instrument to be automatically calibrated in the field. During a calibration procedure, the blackbody reference is heated to ~80ºC and then allowed to cool to near ambient temperature while acquiring image data in each of IR filters. This calibration procedure takes about an hour and is used to determine instrument response as a function of blackbody radiance. Calibration images mapping the instrument response are created in the calibration process and are subsequently used to provide on-the-fly calibrated images during normal operation. Further refinements to the calibration images are made after the system is operational.
13.0 Maintenance

The infrared lens and visible glass dome should be periodically cleaned with a lens-cleaning solution and a micro-fiber cloth.

The hatch subsystem requires no maintenance but should be inspected periodically to insure that it is moving freely. This can be done by moving the hatch up and down by hand while it is in the open position. There is some backlash in the gearbox that allows motion through an angle of ~10º. The hatch should move with little resistance within this extent.

14.0 Safety

- Electrical: EN 60950
- Electromagnetic: Class B, EN 61326
- Environmental: ISO 10109-11
- Vibration: IEC 60086-2-6

15.0 Citable References
