

Working Group on Astronomical Software
Annual Report – DRAFT
Submitted by R. J. Hanisch, Chair
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This report covers the period from June 1993 (after the Berkeley AAS Meeting) through June 1993 (including the Minneapolis meeting).

The WGAS held its first winter meeting in conjunction with the Washington AAS Conference in January 1994. In addition to the usual business meeting and contributed papers, WGAS hosted a special session on Network Information Systems for Astronomy. Despite being held during the last session of the day on Saturday the room was full – a clear indication of how important wide-area networks have become in facilitating astronomical research. Given the success of this session it is our hope that the WGAS can continue to sponsor topical presentations such as this which bring developments in astronomical software, computer systems, and networking, to the attention of the members of the Society.

Interest in astronomical software development continues to be strong within the Society, as evidenced by having 12 papers submitted as BAAS technical reports for publication this summer. All papers but one were submitted electronically using a \LaTeX -based mark-up derived from \AASTeX . This allowed for easy editing of the manuscripts and will provide for a consistent appearance of all papers in the published journal.

The Astronomical Data Analysis Software and Systems (ADASS) Conference series is now entering its fourth year. Although this conference is not under the aegis of the AAS, many AAS/WGAS members participate on the Program Organizing Committee. ADASS III was held in October 1993 in Victoria, BC, and hosted by the Dominion Astrophysical Observatory, Canadian Astronomy Data Center, and the University of Victoria. Some 225 registered participants presented 130 papers and posters. The proceedings of the conference are being edited by D. Crabtree (DAO/CADC), R. Hanisch (ST ScI), and J. Barnes (NOAO). ADASS IV will be held on 25–28 September 1994 in Baltimore, with the Space Telescope Science Institute acting as the local host. Attendance is expected to be well over 300.

The WGAS continues to be active in areas related to the FITS data format standard. Most discussions on FITS issues now take place on the Internet newsgroup sci.astro.fits. In the winter of 1994 a lively debate has taken place over extending the FITS format to include support for unsigned 16 and 32-bit integers. The issue is not yet resolved. The next major face-to-face discussions of the topic are likely to occur during a special interest FITS session held in conjunction with the ADASS IV Conference in Baltimore.

Because the WGAS met at the winter meeting in 1994, there will be no WGAS in Minneapolis. Current plans are to reconvene WGAS at the winter 1995 meeting in Tucson.