

IAU 2006 Resolution 3

English version

Re-definition of Barycentric Dynamical Time, TDB

The XXVIth International Astronomical Union General Assembly,

Noting

1. that IAU Recommendation 5 of Commissions 4, 8 and 31 (1976) introduced, as a replacement for Ephemeris Time (ET), a family of dynamical time scales for barycentric ephemerides and a unique time scale for apparent geocentric ephemerides,
2. that IAU Resolution 5 of Commissions 4, 19 and 31 (1979) designated these time scales as Barycentric Dynamical Time (TDB) and Terrestrial Dynamical Time (TDT) respectively, the latter subsequently renamed Terrestrial Time (TT), in IAU Resolution A4, 1991,
3. that the difference between TDB and TDT was stipulated to comprise only periodic terms, and
4. that Recommendations III and V of IAU Resolution A4 (1991) (i) introduced the coordinate time scale Barycentric Coordinate Time (TCB) to supersede TDB, (ii) recognized that TDB was a linear transformation of TCB, and (iii) acknowledged that, where discontinuity with previous work was deemed to be undesirable, TDB could be used, and

Recognizing

1. that TCB is the coordinate time scale for use in the Barycentric Celestial Reference System,
2. the possibility of multiple realizations of TDB as defined currently,
3. the practical utility of an unambiguously defined coordinate time scale that has a linear relationship with TCB chosen so that at the geocenter the difference between this coordinate time scale and Terrestrial Time (TT) remains small for an extended time span,
4. the desirability for consistency with the Teph time scales used in the Jet Propulsion Laboratory (JPL) solar-system ephemerides and existing TDB implementations such as that of Fairhead & Bretagnon (*A&A* **229**, 240, 1990), and
5. the 2006 recommendations of the IAU Working Group on "Nomenclature for Fundamental Astronomy" (*IAU Transactions XXVIB*, 2006),

Recommends

that, in situations calling for the use of a coordinate time scale that is linearly related to Barycentric Coordinate Time (TCB) and, at the geocenter, remains close to Terrestrial Time (TT) for an extended time span, TDB be defined as the following linear transformation of TCB:

$$\text{TDB} = \text{TCB} - L_B \times (\text{JD}_{\text{TCB}} - T_0) \times 86400 + \text{TDB}_0,$$

where $T_0 = 2443144.5003725$,

and $L_B = 1.550519768 \times 10^{-8}$ and $\text{TDB}_0 = -6.55 \times 10^{-5}$ s are defining constants.

Notes

1. JD_{TCB} is the TCB Julian date. Its value is $T_0 = 2443144.5003725$ for the event 1977 January 1 00h 00m 00s TAI at the geocenter, and it increases by one for each 86400s of TCB.
2. The fixed value that this definition assigns to L_B is a current estimate of $L_C + L_G - L_C \times L_G$, where L_G is given in IAU Resolution B1.9 (2000) and L_C has been determined (Irwin & Fukushima, 1999, *A&A* **348**, 642) using the JPL ephemeris DE405. When using the JPL Planetary Ephemeris DE405, the defining L_B value effectively eliminates a linear drift between TDB and TT, evaluated at the geocenter. When realizing TCB using other ephemerides, the difference between TDB and TT, evaluated at the geocenter, may include some linear drift, not expected to exceed 1 ns per year.
3. The difference between TDB and TT, evaluated at the surface of the Earth, remains under 2 ms for several millennia around the present epoch.
4. The independent time argument of the JPL ephemeris DE405, which is called Teph (Standish, *A&A*, **336**, 381, 1998), is for practical purposes the same as TDB defined in this Resolution.
5. The constant term TDB_0 is chosen to provide reasonable consistency with the widely used TDB – TT formula of Fairhead & Bretagnon (1990).
n.b. The presence of TDB_0 means that TDB is not synchronized with TT, TCG and TCB at 1977 Jan 1.0 TAI at the geocenter.
6. For solar system ephemerides development the use of TCB is encouraged.