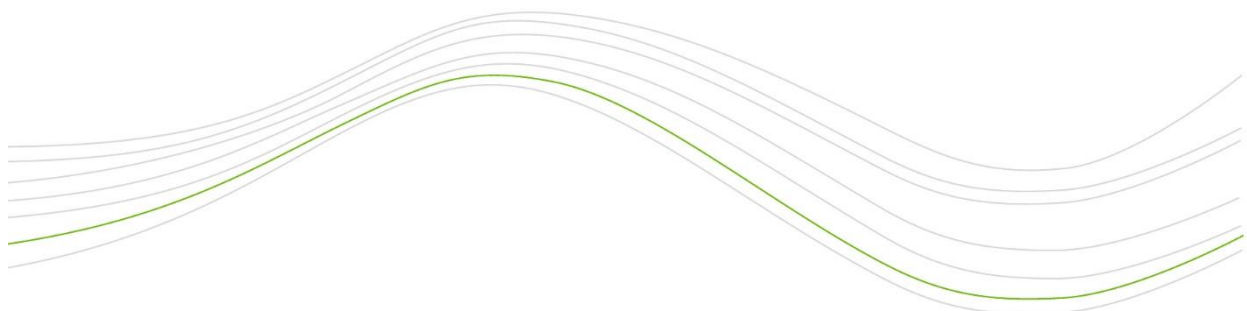




Kartverket

Report no. 19-04811-12

# ITRF Local tie survey at the geodetic observatory at Brandal, Ny-Ålesund Svalbard



**Document information:**

Title: ITRF Local tie survey at the geodetic observatory at Brandal, Ny-Ålesund Svalbard

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Authors: Oddvar B. Tangen, Ove C. D. Omang and Damien Pesce

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Summary: Determination of local ties at the geodetic observatory of Brandal, Ny-Ålesund. Description of survey methods, computations and results.

Keywords: VLBI, GNSS, Doris, Total station, Reference points

Reviewer: Per Chr. Bratheim

## **ABSTRACT**

The ITRF2014 realization (the most recent frame of the International Terrestrial Reference System) computed by the ITRF Product Centre (IGN Geodesy research team from IPGP) is the result of the reference frames combinations from four space geodetic techniques (GNSS, DORIS, SLR and VLBI). The next ITRF update is intended to be ITRF2020, planned to be realised in 2021.

Local ties of reference points at sites with multiple techniques are crucial for the realise of ITRF. The geodetic observatory of Brandal, Ny-Ålesund at Svalbard is equipped with two VLBI telescopes, DORIS station and three permanent GNSS stations. One of the GNSS-stations is proposed to become part of the IGS network. The other two GNSS stations have stability problems. The observatory is also equipped with a gravimetric lab, and a SLR site is under construction. This report describes the local tie survey carried out in August/September 2019 and 2020.

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# 1 Introduction

## 1.1 Context

The International Terrestrial Reference Frame (ITRF) is the result of a combination of different terrestrial reference frames provided by the four space geodetic techniques (GNSS, DORIS, SLR and VLBI). To combine the technique specific reference frames to ITRF, local tie surveys between co-located space geodetic instruments are necessary. The ties are expressed in three dimensions with a precision reflecting the accuracy of the reference frame. To improve the ITRF realization, local tie vectors from new co-located sites need to be added to the ITRF combination. At the new observatory at Brandal, Ny Ålesund three space geodetic techniques are now present: VLBI, GNSS and DORIS.

The goals were the following:

- Assign coordinates to the reference points of the two VLBI-telescopes, DORIS antenna and GNSS sites.
- Provide tie vectors between instrument reference points (i.e. DORIS, GNSS and VLBI intersection point)
- Produce a survey result file in SINEX format.

## 1.2 Glossary

ARP:	Antenna Reference Point
CNES:	Centre National d'Études Spatiales (France)
DOMES:	Directory of MERIT Sites
DORIS:	Doppler Orbitography and Radiopositioning Integrated by Satellite
GGOS:	Global Geodetic Observing System
GNSS:	Global Navigation Satellite System
IDS:	International DORIS Service
IERS:	International Earth Rotation and Reference Systems Service
IGN:	Institut National de l'Information Géographique et Forestière (France)
IGS:	International GNSS Service
Kartverket:	Norwegian Mapping Authority
SINEX:	Solution INdependent Exchange
SLR:	Satellite Laser Ranging
VLBI:	Very Long Baseline Interferometry
Wasoft:	GNSS software from University of Dresden by prof. L. Wanninger

## 2 Co-location site description

### 2.1 Site information

The new geodetic observatory is located close to Ny Ålesund at Svalbard about 1.5 km north of the old observatory at Rabben. The observatory at Rabben include the VLBI antenna NYALES20 and the GNSS stations NYAL and NYA1. The new observatory, except the DORIS equipment, is owned by Kartverket (Norwegian Mapping Authority).



Figure 1 Map of Spitsbergen, Svalbard

## 2.2 Co-located points

The observatory at Brandal, Ny-Ålesund is equipped with VLBI 2010 twin telescopes, three GNSS-stations, DORIS station, gravimetric lab, and SLR site under construction. For local tie purposes, there are nine control points and one automatic total station for stability monitoring. One of the GNSS-stations, NABG is proposed as IGS and EPN-stations. The other two stations, NABD and NABE are not stable and show annual variations in GNSS position.

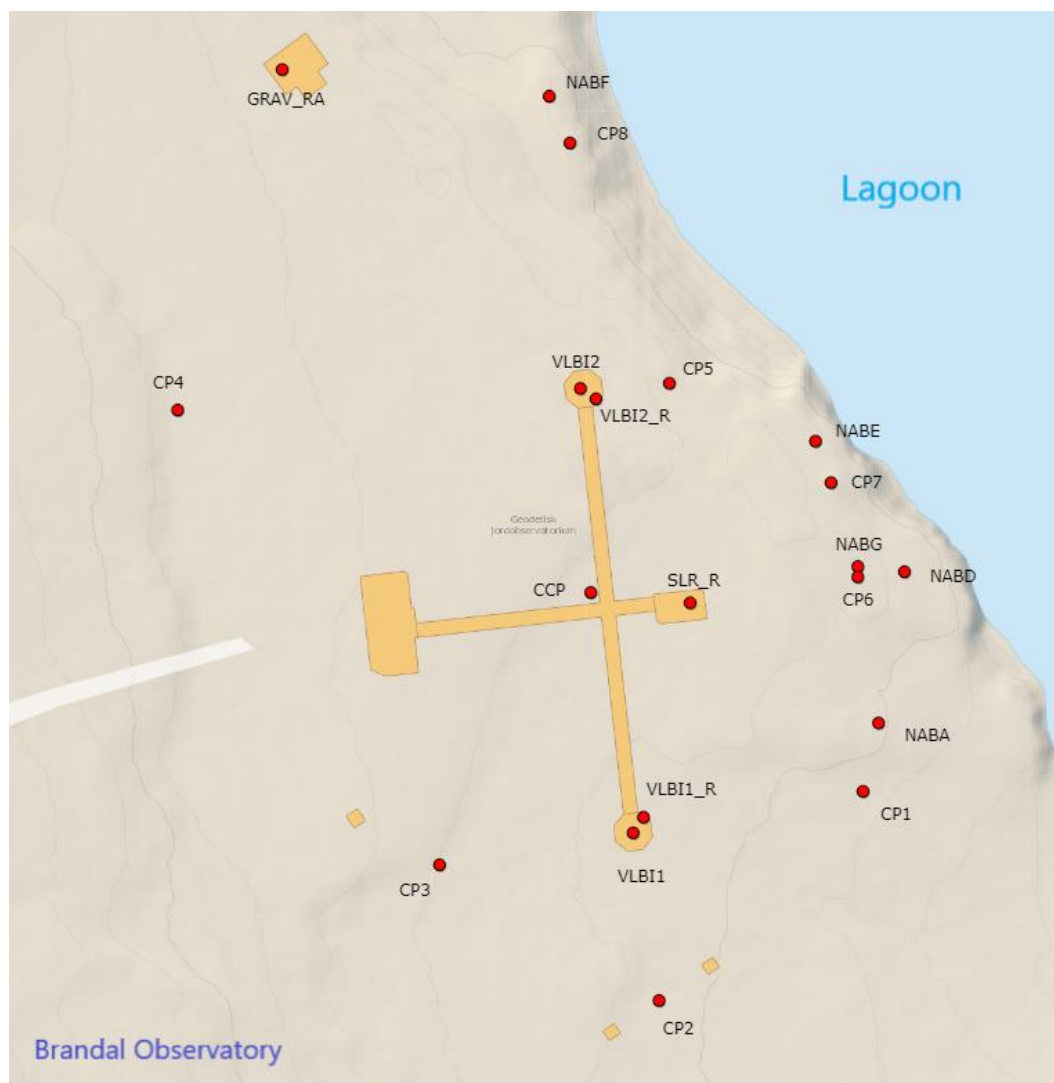


Figure 2 Map of Brandal Geodetic Observatory

Table 1 Co-located points

Technique Name	Domes no.	Description	Acronym
GNSS	10338M008	ARP, BAM. Top steel grid mast	NABG
VLBI	10338S001	VLBI1, south, intersection point	7392
VLBI	10338S002	VLBI2, north, intersection point	7393
DORIS	10338S003	DORIS antenna reference point	SVAC

The co-located points are listed in table 1. All the control points are listed in table 2. Figures 3 - 5 show some of the co-located points and control points.



Figure 3 Control points. From left: CP2 with GNSS antenna, CP7 with prism, CP7 with total station



Figure 4 DORIS

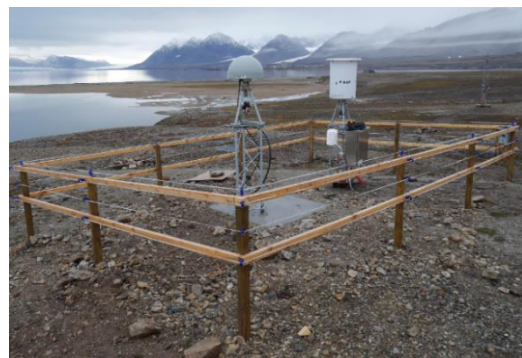


Figure 5 Permanent GNSS station NABG and CP6 with continuously operating Trimble total station



Table 2 Markers used in the local tie survey

Technique name	Description	Name or number
GNSS	GNSS station. Slightly unstable ~ 2 -3 mm	NABD
GNSS	GNSS station. Slightly unstable ~ 3 -4 mm	NABE
TS, prism	Prism holder under NABD antenna mount	NABD_U
TS, prism	Prism holder under NABE antenna mount	NABE_U
Total station/GNSS	Control points, short steel grid masts. All more or less unstable. Equipped with GNSS for monitoring stability.	CP1 – CP10
Total station/GNSS	Control point on 5 m steel grid mast. Unstable	CCP
TS, prism	Prism holder on steel grid mast, previous GNSS	NABA_R
TS, prism	Prism holder on steel grid mast, previous GNSS	NABF_R
GNSS	Bolt in concrete monument, far away point	S01T0001
GNSS	Bolt, screw in concrete monument, far away point	S01T0015
GNSS	Bolt, screw in concrete monument, far away point	S01T0016
TS, prism, GNSS	Bolt, screw in bedrock, far away point	S01T0017
TS, prism, GNSS	Bolt, screw in bedrock, far away point	S01T0018
TS, prism, GNSS	Bolt, screw in bedrock, far away point	S01T0020
TS, prism, GNSS	Bolt, screw in concrete monument, far away point	S01T0021
Continuously operating TS	Trimble Total Station installed and operated by company Cautus Geo. Stability measurement, VLBI, SLR, and GNSS monuments	CP6

## 3 Local tie survey description

### 3.1 Organization

The local tie survey observations were done from 23 August to 1 September 2019 and from 24 August to 5 September 2020 by Oddvar Tangen and Torbjørn Nørbech. Working outdoor at the observatory calls for a polar bear guard.

### 3.2 Equipment

All instruments are owned by Kartverket. The total Station is calibrated and maintained annually.

*Table 3 Equipment used in the survey*

Equipment	Trade mark, Serial number	Specifications
Total Station	Leica TS 15 , 1622095	EDM st.. dev. 1.0 mm + 1 ppm Angular st. dev. 0.6 mgon
Total Station	Leica TS 15, 1612188	EDM st.. dev. 1.0 mm + 1 ppm Angular st. dev. 0.6 mgon
Reflector/Prism	Leica GPH1P	Centring accuracy 0.3 mm
Reflector/Prism, Magnetic	Leica Red Ring Reflector (RRR)	Centring accuracy 0.0254 mm
GNSS antenna (GNSS campaign network)	ASH700936E, CR15811 ASH700936E_M, CR520023605 ASH700936C_M, 11783 ASH700936C_M, 11978	
GNSS antenna (GNSS campaign network)	TRM29659.00, 0220098649 TRM29659.00, 0220098660 TRM29659.00, 0220098656 TRM29659.00, 0220098661	
GNSS receiver (GNSS campaign network)	TRIMBLE NETRS 4345228744 TRIMBLE NETRS 4439239161 TRIMBLE NETRS 4422234356 TRIMBLE NETRS 4422234369 TRIMBLE NETRS 4541260288 TRIMBLE NETRS 4422234360 TRIMBLE NETRS 4412232899 TRIMBLE NETRS 4345228724	

Metrological data are taken from the AWIPEV research station and confirmed with an older Thommen barometer and Kern psychrometer for temperature.

### **3.3 Survey method**

The total station has observed to all control points with visible lines of sight. Horizontal directions, zenith angles and distances are observed in data sets, first defining the set by aiming the targets, and then the total station runs through the sets automatically. Five readings in both theodolite positions and four full sets are measured. The relatively high number of readings is chosen in order to compensate for the slightly lower accuracy of the Leica TS 15 compared to the best total stations available. The short steel grid mast design of the control points provides a very stable instrument setup for the duration of one campaign, but due to unstable ground conditions, they are not stable over longer time periods.

The GNSS network is a combination of observations in 2016 and in 2019-2020. The 2016 campaign was carried out with seven days of observations on the points named S01T00\*\*. The GNSS observations from 2019 and 2020 include the permanent stations NYA1 and NABG, and the unstable stations NABD and NABE

The control points CCP, CP1, CP2, CP3, CP4 CP7 and CP8 at Brandal are normally equipped with GNSS. The GNSS antennas were replaced with the total station and reflectors during the local tie campaign. On CP9 and CP10 we made GNSS observations during the local tie campaign in 2020.

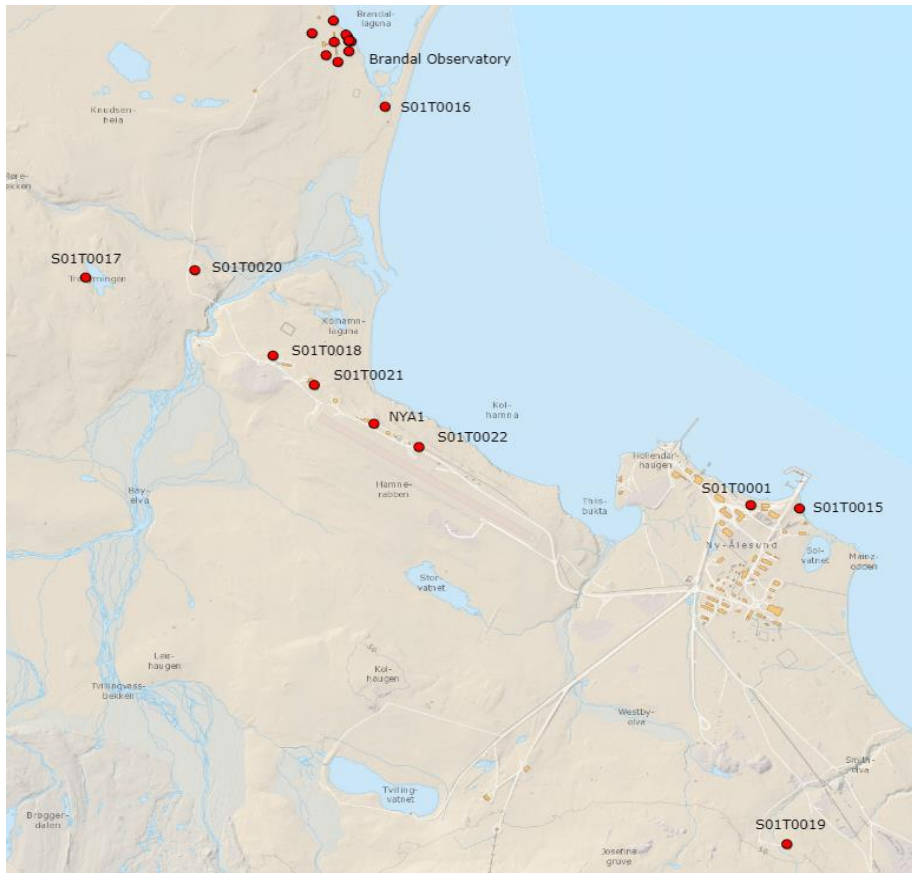


Figure 6 GNSS observation points

### 3.3.1 VLBI reference points

The VLBI reference points are in this survey determined by combined observations to targets inside the azimuth cabins and the control points outside. The azimuth cabins are each equipped with eight magnetic prism holders for RRR-prisms. The positions of the prism holders are determined in an internal coordinate system by the manufacturer Asturfeito. The total station is placed on a tripod in a position that provides lines of sight to at least three control points outside and the eight RRR-prisms inside the cabins. The VLBI telescopes has to be set in a certain azimuth position to get access to the outside control points through a small hatch and the two doors on each side of the cabins.



Figure 7 RRR-prism



Figure 8 VLBI, door and hatch



Figure 9 Total station inside azimuth cabin

### 3.3.2 GNSS reference point

The reference point, ARP/BAM, of the GNSS-station NABG was observed with total station directly on the reference point before the antenna was mounted in September 2019. The IGS14 coordinates of NABG are determined by GPS L1 baselines from the IGS station NYA1.



Figure 10 From left: NABG with total station, NABG with prism and NABG\_U, NABG GNSS and NABG\_U

### 3.3.3 DORIS reference point



Figure 11 DORIS antenna and prism DORIS\_R

The DORIS station is located 350 meters southwest of the VLBI telescopes, behind a hilltop. To get the connection between DORIS and the control point network, two new control points CP9 and CP10 were established in 2019. To determine the DORIS reference point we use two temporary tripod setups close to the DORIS station. From these setups, we do total station observations to the DORIS-antenna and to the control points. On the antenna, we measure with tangential sightlines at the top, the red ring and the bottom, left and right side. The most precise vertical observations were done to the red ring. The very bottom of the antenna is not visible due to the slightly rising sightlines from the total station. An eccentric prism holder was mounted on the top of the mast. This provides a precise target for stability monitoring. On the ground plate there is a small marker or hole. In 2020, this marker had become almost invisible because of rust. A nail was put in the hole to make the observations easier.

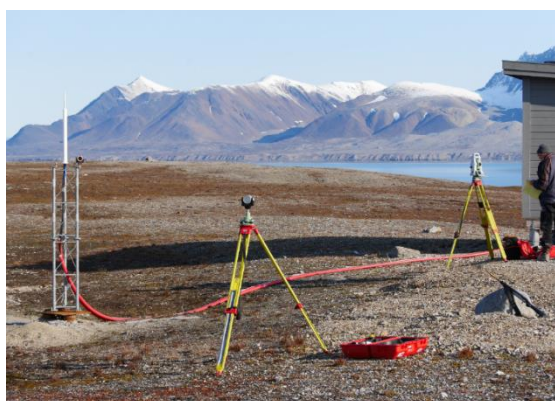


Figure 12 Tripod setups



Figure 13 Marker in ground plate, a nail in the hole to make the observations easier

## 4 Computation and data analysis

This chapter describes the computation of the 2019 and 2020 survey campaigns.

### 4.1 GNSS network

The points NABG, S01T0017, S01T0018, S01T0020 and S01T0021 are determined by GNSS observations. GPS L1 baselines are processed with Wasoft GNSS SW from observations in 2016 and 2019-2020. The network adjustment is done at Kartverket with the domestic softwares Gunda and Hoyde. The IGS station NYA1 was fixed in the computation with its official IGS14 coordinates and velocities. Least square network adjustment was done separately for horizontal and vertical coordinates, and the coordinates are determined with a standard deviation at  $\sim 1$  mm in both dimensions.

## 4.2 Final adjustment

The final adjustment was done at IGN by Damien Pesce. The data was processed using 3D least-square adjustment with IGN COMP3d version 5.19 software. The input file comes from:

- Total station observations : horizontal and zenith angles, distances ;
- Height differences between points of NABG and DORIS stations;
- Centring equations : relative position between points ;
- Orientation points coordinates constrained at 1 mm to its IGS14 epoch 2018.00 values;
- NABG reference point coordinates, constrained at 0.1 mm to its IGS14 epoch 2018.00 values.

The a priori standard deviations used for most of the observations with total station are:

- 0.3 mgon for horizontal angles
- 0.6 mgon for vertical angles,
- 0.6 mm + 1 PPM for distances on prism.

The input and output coordinates are in the UTM 33N projection but the computations are done in local stereographic projection. This adjustment provides coordinates and a covariance matrix of the survey work.

The terrestrial adjustment was processed taking into account the mean vertical deflection on the site from the geoid model HREF\_BRANDAL\_2021A.

Vertical deflection: east-west ( $\eta$ ) = 8.4 arcsec and north-south ( $\xi$ ) = 4.21 arcsec

### 4.2.1 Description of HREF\_BRANDAL

#### Starting point

As starting point we use the Arctic Gravity Project geoid, arcgp-2006-sk. A smaller grid is extracted covering the area; latitude 78.930000 - 78.945000; longitude 11.810000 - 11.870000. The smaller grid is re-gridded to a spacing of 0.001x 0.002 degrees or approximately 100 m.

#### Estimation

The Height REFerence (HREF) model is estimated in three steps:

1. The difference between the geoid and the connection points is estimated. A long wavelength surface is estimated using collocation/second degree Gauss-Markov with a correlation length of 10 km and noise of 5 mm. This surface is added to the original geoid.
2. Item 1 is repeated with correlation length of 1 km, noise 1 mm and geoid from item 1.
3. Item 1 is repeated with correlation length of 0.3 km, noise 0.5 mm and geoid from item 2.

## Brandal HREF

The resulting HREF model is named HREF\_BRANDAL\_2021A.bin

### 4.2.2 VLBI reference points determination

The telescope manufacturer provides the coordinates of the 8 prisms inside the azimuth cabin for the two telescopes. Those coordinates are given in a local Cartesian frame with the VLBI reference point as origin. The accuracy of the local coordinates is 0.01mm.

A 6-parameter transformation was adjusted between the local coordinates in the azimuth cabin-fixed frame and the coordinates in the frame of the data adjustment using all available observations.

This transformation is working well for the north telescope. For the south telescope, we need to invert the sign of the x components of the manufacturer azimuth cabin-frame to make it fit to the survey observations. With this change, the adjustment works well.

## 5 Results

### 5.1 Adjusted coordinates and confidence intervals

The results of the adjustment are the coordinates of all points and their confidence ellipsoids in IGS14 at epoch 2018.00.

The tables below provide the 3D coordinates. The tenth of a millimetre is given as an indication.

*Table 4 Cartesian Coordinates in IGS14 epoch 2018.00 from the 2019 survey campaign*

Point - process name	X (m)	Y (m)	Z (m)
SVAC - DORIS	1201299.7299	251874.6071	6238000.5855
NABG - NABG	1201009.2593	252158.0768	6238022.1881
7392 - VLBI1A19	1201070.6352	252129.3262	6238022.4990
7393 - VLBI2A19	1200992.6719	252098.6298	6238038.6421



Table 5 Cartesian Coordinates in IGS14 epoch 2018.00 from the 2020 survey campaign

Point – process name	X (m)	Y (m)	Z (m)
SVAC – DORIS2	1201299.7299	251874.6077	6238000.5904
NABG – NABG	1201009.2593	252158.0768	6238022.1881
7392 – VLBI1A20	1201070.6347	252129.3267	6238022.4996
7393 – VLBI2A20	1200992.6713	252098.6293	6238038.6429

The tables below provide confidence ellipsoid (3D) at  $2.5\sigma$ . (That means the results have 90% of probability to be inside the ellipsoid)

Table 6 3D confidence regions  $2.5\sigma$  (90 percent) from the 2019 survey campaign in the local reference frame

Point – process nb	½ axis (mm)	Azimuth (gr)	Tilt (gr)
SVAC – DORIS	1.3	32.40	100
	1.0	152.14	0
	1.0	52.14	0
NABG – NABG	0.3	27.31	100
	0.3	111.00	0
	0.3	11.00	0
7392 – VLBI1A19	0.8	107.02	200
	0.8	7.23	17
	0.8	4.20	83
7393 – VLBI2A19	0.8	87.36	150
	0.5	85.33	50
	0.3	186.34	200

Table 7 3D confidence regions  $2.5 \sigma$  (90 percent) from the 2020 survey campaign in the local reference frame

Point – process nb	½ axis (mm)	Azimuth (gr)	Tilt (gr)
SVAC – DORIS2	1.8	22.09	105
	1.8	298.89	5
	1.5	99.02	2
NABG - NABG	0.3	44.05	100
	0.3	113.11	0
	0.3	13.11	0
7392 - VLBI1A20	1.5	83.12	4
	1.3	183.17	1
	0.8	95.18	96
7393 - VLBI2A20	1.5	83.06	4
	1.3	183.11	1
	0.8	95.09	96

A complete covariance matrix was computed. Covariance submatrix for the main points of interest was extracted for the following ITRF solution computation. Finally, the covariance submatrixes were converted into SINEX format using the « geotosnx » tool provided by Z. Altamimi (LAREG, IGN). The resulting SINEX files are provided in Appendix A.

## 5.2 Results comparisons

The table below provides the differences in results between the two computations.

Table 8 Coordinate differences from the 2019 and 2020 computations

Point	$\Delta X$ (mm)	$\Delta Y$ (mm)	$\Delta Z$ (mm)
SVAC	0.0	0.5	4.9
NABG	0.0	0.0	0.0
7392	-0.5	0.5	0.6
7393	-0.6	-0.6	0.8

The differences in coordinates of the VLBI reference points 7392 and 7393 are as expected based on the instrument specifications. The 4.9 mm difference of the z-coordinate of the Doris antenna SVAC is most likely due to imprecise observations to the bottom of the antenna. This will be re-measured during the 2021 survey campaign.

### 5.3 Vectors

The following tables show vectors in Cartesian coordinate system (IGS14 ep.2018.00). The tenth of a millimetre is provided as an indication.

Table 9 Vectors from the 2019 survey campaign

	$\Delta X$ (m)	$\Delta Y$ (m)	$\Delta Z$ (m)
NABG → SVAC	290.4706	-283.4697	-21.6026
NABG → 7392	61.3759	-28.7506	0.3109
NABG → 7393	-16.5874	-59.4470	16.4540
7392 → 7393	-77.9633	-30.6964	16.1431
SVAC → 7392	-229.0947	254.7191	21.9135
SVAC → 7393	-307.0580	224.0227	38.0566

Table 10 Vectors from the 2020 survey campaign

	$\Delta X$ (m)	$\Delta Y$ (m)	$\Delta Z$ (m)
NABG → SVAC	290.4706	-283.4691	-21.5977
NABG → 7392	61.3754	-28.7501	0.3115
NABG → 7393	-16.5880	-59.4475	16.4548
7392 → 7393	-77.9634	-30.6974	16.1433
SVAC → 7392	-229.0952	254.7190	21.9092
SVAC → 7393	-307.0586	224.0216	38.0525

## 6 APPENDIX A SINEX files

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### 10338\_Kartverket\_2020-244.SNX

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%=SNX 1.00 IGN 21:075:00000 IGN 20:244:00000 20:244:00000 C 00012
```

```

*-----
+FILE/COMMENT
* File created by geotosnx software (Z.Altamimi)
* Original input file: .\2020-3.comp.cov
* Matrix Scalling Factor used: 1.0000000000
-FILE/COMMENT
*-----
+SITE/ID
*CODE PT __DOMES__ T_STATION DESCRIPTION__ APPROX_LON_ APPROX_LAT__ APP_H_
SVAC A 10338S003 10338S003 11 50 29.6 78 56 27.8 65.1
NABG A 10338M008 10338M008 11 51 26.3 78 56 35.1 43.0
7392 A 10338S001 10338S001 11 51 19.4 78 56 33.4 53.6
7393 A 10338S002 10338S002 11 51 17.1 78 56 36.1 53.6
-SITE/ID
*-----
+SOLUTION/EPOCHS
*Code PT SOLN T Data_start__ Data_end____ Mean_epoch__
-SOLUTION/EPOCHS
*-----
+SOLUTION/ESTIMATE
*INDEX TYPE__ CODE PT SOLN _REF_EPOCH__ UNIT S __ESTIMATED VALUE____ _STD_DEV____
1 STAX SVAC A 1 20:244:00000 m 2 0.120129972987000E+07 0.66066E-03
2 STAY SVAC A 1 20:244:00000 m 2 0.251874607672000E+06 0.57438E-03
3 STAZ SVAC A 1 20:244:00000 m 2 0.623800059036000E+07 0.71720E-03
4 STAX NABG A 1 20:244:00000 m 2 0.120100925927000E+07 0.99965E-04
5 STAY NABG A 1 20:244:00000 m 2 0.252158076793000E+06 0.99997E-04
6 STAZ NABG A 1 20:244:00000 m 2 0.623802218808000E+07 0.99999E-04
7 STAX 7392 A 1 20:244:00000 m 2 0.120107063471000E+07 0.53621E-03
8 STAY 7392 A 1 20:244:00000 m 2 0.252129326713000E+06 0.54878E-03
9 STAZ 7392 A 1 20:244:00000 m 2 0.623802249957000E+07 0.30663E-03
10 STAX 7393 A 1 20:244:00000 m 2 0.120099267127000E+07 0.53438E-03
11 STAY 7393 A 1 20:244:00000 m 2 0.252098629266000E+06 0.56735E-03
12 STAZ 7393 A 1 20:244:00000 m 2 0.623803864288000E+07 0.28873E-03
-SOLUTION/ESTIMATE
*-----
+SOLUTION/MATRIX_ESTIMATE L COVA
*PARA1 PARA2 __PARA2+0__ __PARA2+1__ __PARA2+2__
1 1 0.436475407233000E-06
2 1 0.262911997249000E-07 0.329915876011000E-06
3 1 0.748588479561000E-08 0.651246516504000E-08 0.514371584243000E-06
4 1 0.984691082085000E-08 0.473142206364000E-10 0.297204739771000E-10
4 4 0.999305733575000E-08
5 1 -.205416125885000E-08 0.784391500549000E-08 0.479243915807000E-09
5 4 0.226036268597000E-13 0.999931393297000E-08
6 1 0.111254055847000E-09 0.779123165310000E-10 0.997515348897000E-08
6 4 0.132709440477000E-11 0.232096669899000E-13 0.999974522021000E-08

```

```
7 1 0.268571120366000E-06 0.246556050321000E-08 -.448088172241000E-07
7 4 0.982124832011000E-08 -.208751804346000E-09 0.424752740832000E-10
7 7 0.287521486211000E-06
8 1 -.375700481988000E-07 0.211894656993000E-06 -.717976489088000E-09
8 4 0.230577168809000E-10 0.953543345514000E-08 0.142822506835000E-10
8 7 -.114421862149000E-07 0.301158055490000E-06
9 1 -.430708411136000E-07 -.794490074404000E-08 0.440348965288000E-07
9 4 0.332505199293000E-10 0.586363602924000E-10 0.999130273070000E-08
9 7 -.378226487970000E-07 -.698561920233000E-08 0.940191540350000E-07
10 1 0.275800142304000E-06 0.417789423503000E-08 -.464173337107000E-07
10 4 0.983274915376000E-08 -.436299498605000E-09 0.495321399895000E-10
10 7 0.261183209164000E-06 -.530619484106000E-08 -.435122760959000E-07
10 10 0.285562490533000E-06
11 1 -.623823757424000E-07 0.210190582315000E-06 0.399006418017000E-08
11 4 -.662947357945000E-11 0.101245231329000E-07 -.363297889030000E-11
11 7 -.857213450947000E-08 0.263655621291000E-06 -.885143818313000E-08
11 10 -.267162388029000E-07 0.321891213713000E-06
12 1 -.429865286293000E-07 -.807880635084000E-08 0.428865055704000E-07
12 4 0.315037292428000E-10 0.784840895177000E-10 0.999081449995000E-08
12 7 -.428804883636000E-07 -.102548166811000E-07 0.413947227123000E-07
12 10 -.335158874555000E-07 -.209706532587000E-07 0.833630820979000E-07
-SOLUTION/MATRIX_ESTIMATE L COVA
%ENDSNX
```



# Kartverket

[www.kartverket.no](http://www.kartverket.no)

Postal and billing address:

P.O. Box 600 Sentrum, 3507 Hønefoss, Norway

Telephone: (+47) 32 11 80 00

Email: [post@kartverket.no](mailto:post@kartverket.no)

VAT number: 971 040 238

