

# **FreezeFrame 4**

# **User's Manual**

**Video-Based System for:**  
**(Contextual) Fear Conditioning**  
**Tail Suspension**  
**Porsolt (Forced) Swim Test**



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# FREEZEFRAME RECORDER

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## Introduction

FreezeFrame is a computerized system for the **Conditioned Fear Test** that combines the sensitivity of the human observer with the objectivity and convenience of automation.

While infrared beams or video tracking systems can detect gross movements of an animal from one part of the cage to another, FreezeFrame can detect the minute movements of grooming, sniffing, turning and rearing.

By recording from 4, 8 or even 12 animals at once, FreezeFrame is ideal for high-throughput testing of large numbers of animals.

- **Not a tracking system.** FreezeFrame uses a proprietary motion detection algorithm that filters out shadows, light flicker and camera noise.
- **Detects movements as small as 1 mm.**
- **Fully validated.** >90% concordance between FreezeFrame and a trained human observer.
- **Multiple stimulus protocols** can be stored for training and testing phases of the experiments.
- **Display images on the computer screen.** No external monitor necessary.
- **Store images for later review.**
- **Export data and analyses in spreadsheet format.**
- **Easy setup.**
  - Sounds (white noise or tone) are delivered through the computer's speakers.
  - The shocker-scrambler is controlled directly from the computer.
  - 2 additional external stimuli may be controlled as well.

## 4-Hz sampling frequency.

## 4, 8 and 12 channel systems

- Record 4 animals at once using a single computer and camera with the FreezeFrame 4-channel system.
- Use 1 camera to record from 4 chambers or 1 camera for each chamber.
- Record 8 or 12 animals with 2 or 3 linked computers, each running the FreezeFrame 4-channel system.

## System Requirements

### Computer

FreezeFrame runs on Windows XP/Vista/7/8 computers. We recommend:

- Core2Duo or later processor
- 4 Gigabyte of RAM (minimum)
- Windows 7 32-bit or 64-bit
- 15" monitor or larger (1280 x 1024 resolution)
- 250 GB Hard Drive (minimum)
- Sound card and speakers
- If you plan to store the acquired images, a CD or DVD writer for backing up data files.

### Hardware

**Camera.** A USB black-and-white CCD camera (supplied)

**USB Digital Interface.** USB interface with eight digital outputs and eight digital inputs (supplied)

**Shocker-scrambler, cage and cables.** FreezeFrame will connect easily to most available fear conditioning hardware.

## SenTech USB Cameras Installation

**Camera Driver Software.** The drivers for the SenTech cameras should install on your computer when you install the FreezeFrame software. If the drivers have installed properly, you should see the program StCamSWare in the list of programs under the start menu. If the drivers have not installed properly, you may find them on the SenTech website (<http://www.sentechamerica.com/company-support/software.aspx>; select USB 2.0 Mini Series and camera STC-MB33USB) for the link to the "USB Viewing Software". The drivers are also available on the Actimetrics web site's Software Updates page. Be sure to install the version of the drivers that matches your operating system. The 32-bit version of the drivers is appropriate for Windows XP and Window 7 32-bit. The 64-bit version is appropriate for Windows 7 64-bit.

**Plug in the Cameras.** The SenTech cameras plug directly into the USB ports of your computer. You may use between 1 and 4 cameras. If your computer does not have enough USB ports to support the number of cameras you have (for example if you are using a laptop computer), you can use an inexpensive USB hub, such as those from Belkin. The hub must support the USB 2.0 protocol and have an independent power connection.

When you plug in your camera, Windows will ask you standard questions about where to find the drivers:



Can Windows Connect to Windows Update to search for Software? **No, not this time.**  
What do you want the wizard to do? **Install software automatically (advanced).**

The drivers should now install automatically.

**Camera Order.** The order in which the SenTech camera images are first displayed in the FreezeFrame Window is not necessarily the order in which you might want them to appear. Use the Settings -> Camera Order... menu item to set the image order.

**Iris and Gain Adjustment.** Once the cameras are installed and in place and you can view the images, you will need to adjust the iris opening (Brightness) of the lens on each camera and, if necessary, the Gain settings of the cameras (Settings -> Camera... menu item).

## Stimulus Interface Installation

The stimulus interface for controlling shockers, lights and other stimuli also plugs into a USB port (or hub). The drivers (DAQmx Base from National Instruments) can be found at:

<http://www.ni.com/download/ni-daqmx-base-3.2/1077/en/>

or on the Software Updates page of the Actimetrics web site. Follow the same procedure as above for letting Windows install the drivers when you first plug in the board.

## Configure the computer's speakers and sound card

FreezeFrame relies on the computer's sound card and speakers for generating conditioning stimuli. Connect the computer's speakers as in your computer manual and test the sound system. You can test the system by playing a CD (from the START menu, choose Accessories->Multimedia->CD Player), or by opening the Sounds control panel, selecting a sound and playing it using the rightward pointing arrow ("Preview:").

If the sounds do not play, check the speaker connections, whether they are turned on and whether the volume is set high enough. Next check whether the drivers for the sound card that came with the computer are properly installed and functional. If they are not, consult with the computer manufacturer.

If you are able to play a CD or a sound in the Sounds control panel, FreezeFrame should be able to play conditioning stimuli as well.

## Connect the Shocker to the computer

The first output of the USB Digital Interface is used to control the onset and duration of the shockers. The outputs offer both +24 Volts and + 5 Volts (TTL) to control the shockers. One output is used to control up to four shockers. RJ12 Splitters are readily available if one was not supplied by the manufacturer of the hardware used with your system.

## Connect the Shocker to the cage

Details will vary depending on the shocker and cage you have. Consult the manufacturer's instructions.

## Camera mounting

The camera can be mounted on any standard camera tripod or mounting bracket using a 1/4-20 screw. For a single channel system, the exact placement of the camera is not critical. The camera can be aimed from directly above the cage, or in front of and slightly above the cage, looking down from a 45 degree angle.

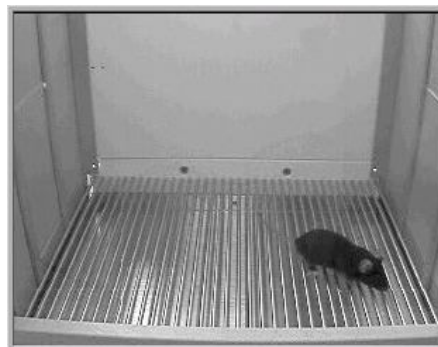
Alternatively, if the rear walls of the chambers are clear, the cameras can be mounted behind the chambers. This leaves the front of the chambers clear for easier loading of animals. One difficulty the rear-mounted cameras introduce is possible artifacts from the user walking in front of the chambers during a trial. Be sure to make the front door of the chambers opaque and to block off the space between the chambers so that the camera cannot see the space in front of the chambers.

## Adjusting Image Quality (Important)

There are 5 critical adjustments that must be made to the image in order to insure proper operation of FreezeFrame. If any one of these conditions is not met, the system's sensitivity will suffer, as will the accuracy of your results. An example of a good camera setup is shown in the image below.

**1) Camera position.** Position the camera and adjust the zoom of the lens so that the **cage fills the image** as much as possible. For 1-camera setups, position the 4 cages as close together as possible.

**2) Camera angle.** Position the camera in front of the cage so that **the entire cage floor is visible**. With a 1-camera setup, it might be necessary to angle the right-hand cages to the left and vice versa so that the camera sees straight in to each cage.



**3) Focus.** Take extra care to **focus the image** properly. Incorrect focus will degrade the program's ability to detect fine movement.

**4) Lighting.** The absolute lighting level is not critical, as long as there is **enough light** in the chamber to give a clear image on the screen. If you do not have an auto-iris lens (one with a short wire that plugs into the camera), adjust the aperture manually so that a clear image is visible on the screen.

- With the aperture set to be too large, areas of the image will become uniformly white or washed out.
- With the aperture set to be too small, the image will become dark and grayed out.
- With the aperture set in the right range, small lighting changes will make little difference in the appearance of the image since they are compensated for by the automatic gain control of the camera

**5) Brightness.** Adjust the iris on the lens for the light levels in your chambers. With either FreezeFrame or the SenTech StCamSWare utility open, locate the iris adjustment on the lens and rotate it until the image looks something like the one shown above. If you are using very low light levels and the image is not bright enough even with the iris completely open, you can increase the internal gain of the camera using the **Camera Setting** dialog in FreezeFrame.

**6) Background.** For the **Swim Test** and **Tail Suspension** analyses, it is important have a uniform background of a color that is different from the animal itself. A neutral gray background that is uniformly lit is the best and will allow the program to analyze white and black animals alike.

**7) Reflections.** It is critical that there be **no glare from highly reflective objects** visible on the screen. If you see light glinting off any shiny surfaces (that is, saturated parts of the image that are completely white), adjust the lighting or camera angle, or as a last resort put tape over the reflective surface. Similarly, there should be no completely black areas of the image. An important check for too bright or too dark regions of the image is to run the FreezeFrame data collection program and view the images in Difference (Diff) Mode (see the FreezeFrame [main window](#) description). Most of the image should appear as grey snow that changes from frame to frame. Saturated parts of the image will appear a flat grey with no speckling and no change from frame to frame. It is important to minimize these areas by changing the lighting or the objects in the field of view.

Once the lighting is set, it should not be changed from trial to trial.

## 1 camera - 4 chamber systems

The multichannel system cuts the image up into 4 quadrants of equal size and performs the motion calculation independently on each image. The simplest arrangement is to cluster the 4 cages into a 2x2 array and point the camera at the entire array from above. Alternative arrangements are possible as well. For example, 2 upper cages can be set above and slightly set back from the 2 lower ones, and the camera pointed from in front of slightly above the array.

Make sure that the image of each cage is confined to its own image quadrant. This is most easily checked in the program, using the controls that allow viewing of each quadrant independently.

## The FreezeFrame Recorder Menus and Controls

FreezeFrame starts running when it opens. With the camera and image acquisition board properly configured, you should see the camera image(s) in the window updating about 4 times per second. An asterisk (\*) on the controls below indicates that the setting of the control is telegraphed automatically to the Remote computers, if present.

**Note: Each control contains its own brief description. Select the Help -> Show Context Help menu item to display the floating Help window. Hover the cursor over a control to display that control's internal documentation.**

## File Menu

**Data File.** Use this menu item to select the file into which all data will be written. The currently selected file is displayed in the indicator underneath the image window. If the directory chosen for some reason does not exist, a warning indicator will appear. **You can also select a data file by double-clicking the file-name indicator at the top left of the FreezeFrame Window.**

**To Remote/To Master.** If you are using FreezeFrame on multiple computers that are connected to one another, use this menu item to configure the program as either a Master or Remote. In Master mode, the program controls the Remote computers, starting and stopping trials, and determining stimulus sequences. The Remotes in turn report their data back to the Master.

**Quit.** Exits FreezeFrame.

## Operate Menu

**Names.** Opens a window that allows you to enter all the names for a trial in a single one-dimensional list. **The TAB key moves the cursor from one trial to the next.**

Click **Clear** to clear the names in the array.

Click **OK** to close the Window, copy the names into the Name Controls of the Main Window.

Click **Cancel** to close the window without changes.

Click **Start Trial** to close the window, copy the names into the Main Window, and start a trial.

**Paste Names from Clipboard.** Copy up to 4 names into the clipboard from any text-based program (Word, Excel, WordPad, etc). Copied names can be separated by tabs or returns. Selecting the Paste Names from Clipboard item will paste the names into the 4 name controls to be used as trial names.

**Avid IDs.** Applicable only if you have Avid ID chips in your animals and an Avid chip reader connected to your computer. Contact Actimetrics for information.

**Reference\*.** Collects a reference frame for later tracking of the animal. Same as clicking the **Reference** button underneath the image window. Collect a reference frame before placing the animal in the chamber.

**Start\*.** Starts a trial. Same as the **Start** button. Commands the Remote computers to start at the same time.

**Stop\*.** Aborts a trial without saving data. Same as the **Stop** button. Commands the Remote computers to stop as well.

## Settings Menu

**Analysis.** FreezeFrame can analyze the images for three different experiments. Choose the analysis that is appropriate. If you save the images, the trials can be reanalyzed offline with any of the three methods. Note that FreezeFrame picks a threshold for determining whether the animal is freezing or not during a

trial (as indicated below). This threshold is approximate and can be changed during the analysis of each trial in FreezeView.

**Fear Conditioning.** The images are analyzed for any motion in the field of view. The motion index does not indicate how much motion there is; only whether or not there is motion. Threshold = 10.

**Porsolt Swim Test.** The images are analyzed for whether there is active effort on the part of the animal. Threshold = 50.

**Tail Suspension.** The images are analyzed for whether the animal is actively moving. Threshold = 1.

**SMP.** Significant Motion Pixel analysis is similar in principle to the Fear Conditioning method. For details, see CD Kopec, HW Kessels, DE Bush, CK Cain, JE LeDoux and R Malinow (2007) A robust automated method to analyze rodent motion during fear conditioning. *Neuropharmacology* **52**: 228-233.

**Protocols.** Opens the [Protocol Editor](#) for designing the stimulus sequence of the protocols. **You can also open the Protocol Editor by double-clicking the protocol display at the bottom of the FreezeFrame Window.**

**Stimulus Configuration.** Opens the [Stimulus Configuration](#) window, for setting the polarity of the shock and auxiliary control signals, and the sound stimulus characteristics (amplitude, frequency, tone/hiss, attack).

**Camera Setup.** Opens the [Camera Setup](#) window, for setting the number of cameras and (SenTech only) camera gains.

**Camera Order.** The order in which the SenTech camera images are first displayed in the FreezeFrame Window is not necessarily the order in which you might want them to appear. To rearrange which camera image appears in which quadrant of the FreezeFrame display, select the **Camera Order...** menu item. A window with 6 arrows appears. Click on one of the arrows to switch the corresponding pair of images in the FreezeFrame Window. Once the images are arranged correctly, click OK to close the Camera Order dialog.

**Windowing.** For each camera, you may set a rectangular window, which determines which portion of the image is analyzed. Select which image you wish to window and drag the red cursors to define the image rectangle. If either of the cursors is not visible, press the **Find Cursors** button to bring them onto the screen. To select the entire image for analysis, click the **All** button (the cursors will disappear). Click **Save** to store the settings and exit the Windowing screen. The window for each image is indicated in the main FreezeFrame screen as a black rectangle. **You can open the Windowing setting dialog by double-clicking any of the images in the main FreezeFrame window.**

**Invert Vertical.** When checked, inverts the image in the image window. This setting has no effect on the analyses.

**Invert Horizontal.** When checked, flips the image left-to-right. This setting has no effect on the analyses.

**Save Images\***. Tells FreezeFrame to create an image file for each recorded animal. During the trial, each recorded image is stored in a file called <animal>.ffii, where <animal> is the name of the animal specified in the Animal Names control (below). The ffii file is located in the same directory as the data file.

## Remotes.

**Remote 1.** When checked on the Master computer, tells FreezeFrame to control and read data from Remote computer 1.

**Remote 2.** When checked on the Master computer, tells FreezeFrame to control and read data from Remote computer 2.

**Remote 2.** When checked on the Master computer, tells FreezeFrame to control and read data from Remote computer 3.

**Avid Reader....** Applicable only if you have Avid ID chips in your animals and an Avid chip reader connected to your computer. Contact Actimetrics for information.

## Help Menu

**Help.** Open this help file.

**Show Context Help.** Each control contains its own brief description. Select the Help -> Show Context Help menu item to display the floating Help window. Hover the cursor over a control to display that control's internal documentation.

## Controls and Indicators

### Animal Names Control

**Local.** An array of text boxes is located to the upper left corner of the FreezeFrame window. Prior to a trial, enter the names of the animals to be run into the controls. For 1-camera setups, the four controls correspond to the four quadrants of the image. For 4-camera setups, the 4 controls correspond to the 4 cameras, in the order upper left, upper right, lower left, lower right. These names are used to identify each trial in the freeze data file, and are used as the names of the image files if images are to be saved. As you enter each name, FreezeFrame checks the current data directory for an image file of that name and warns you if one exists by showing an "Overwrite" indicator in the space below the Names controls and disables the start button. **Use the TAB key to move from one text entry box to the next. Use the "Paste Names from Clipboard" menu item to paste names into the Names controls that have been copied into the clipboard from other programs (tab or return delimited).**

**Clear.** The Clear button clears all the names in the Local Name array and places the cursor in the array for entering new names.

**Remote\*.** With FreezeFrame in the Master mode, and the Remote 1 or Remote 2 menu items checked, one or two more sets of **Animal Names** controls appear below the **Local** control. Enter names for the

animals to be run on the remote computers here. The names are sent to the Remote computers and will appear on their screens.

## Motion Index Indicators

**Local.** To the right of the **Name** controls is an array of indicators. The numerical indicator shows the motion index for each camera or image quadrant. The light below the indicator indicates freezing whenever the motion index falls below 10. This is only a rough guideline. The real threshold for freezing will be set in the FreezeView Analysis program.

**Remote.** With FreezeFrame in the Master mode, and the Remote 1, 2 or 3 menu items checked, additional sets of Motion Index indicators will appear below the first, one for each Remote computer. Data are sent automatically from the Remotes and appear in these indicators. If the Remotes are not operating properly or the cable is not connected correctly, a No Data warning will appear. Similarly, an error indicator will appear if the serial port is not responding properly.

## TV/Diff Control

In **TV** mode, the image from the camera is displayed directly. In **Diff** mode, the image display shows the difference between the current and previous images. Diff mode is useful for evaluating and adjusting image quality.

## Reference/Start/Stop\*

These buttons control the start and end of a trial. See the corresponding menu items above.

## Data File and Free Indicators

The Data File indicator shows the currently selected data file. Change the file using the FILE->OPEN menu item (or **double-click the data file indicator**). The **Free** indicator shows how much space is available on the disk containing the current directory. The File Size indicator appears during a trial and shows the size of each of the image files being saved.

## Frame Rate Indicators

The frame rate for data collection is set in the Camera Setup window. The **Frame Rate** indicator will turn yellow if the program for some reason cannot maintain data collection at the chosen rate (a slow processor or disk, or a device like an external USB hard drive is competing with the cameras for access to the USB bus, for example). Data collection will continue even with a low frame rate, but if the condition persists, it should be corrected.

## Protocol Selector Control\*

The protocol Selector is a popup menu to the lower left of the FreezeFrame window. The items in the menu are set by the user in the [Protocol Window](#). The selected protocol is sent automatically to the Remote computers.

## Protocol and Stimulus Display

The chart at the bottom of the screen gives a graphical indication of the protocol sequence. Horizontal bars in the four rows of the display show when each stimulus will come on during a trial. The time scale of the display also varies to indicate the duration of the trial. During a trial, a vertical yellow cursor scrolls across the display to indicate the progress of the trial. As each stimulus is turned on and off, the four indicators to the left show the current status of the stimuli. **Double-click the Protocol display to open the protocol editing window.**

## Video Display

The live display of the camera images. **Double-click the images to open the Windowing dialog (for selecting which portion of the images are to be analyzed for freezing/motion).**

## Protocol Editor

Protocols in FreezeFrame are configured using the Protocol Editor. Open the Protocol Editor from the Main FreezeFrame window by selecting the Setting->Protocols menu item, or by **double-clicking the Protocol Display**.

**Protocol.** FreezeFrame will store up to 20 different stimulus protocols. Select the protocol you wish to change using the Protocol pop-up menu.

**Name.** You can give each protocol a different name (though it is not necessary to do so). Simply type the name into the text box. The name will appear in the Protocol popup menu as well.

**Trial Duration.** This is a text control specifying the total duration of the recording session in seconds. The control will flash red when it is set to 0 as a reminder to change it to a more reasonable value.

## Setting the stimuli

Stimuli can be configured by entering text into the array of cells at the bottom of the Editor window, or **by clicking, dragging and double-clicking on the protocol display in the upper part of the window (see below).**

There are 4 different stimulus channels available: sound, shock, stimulus 3 and stimulus 4. Sound is delivered through the computer's speakers. Shock, stimulus 3 and stimulus 4 are delivered through the T0, T1 and T2 outputs of the 1408/9 (PCI system) or from the ACT-710 (USB cameras). These are TTL



compatible outputs, delivering 0V when in the low state and 5V when in the high state. In the Output Configuration window, you may configure each input to be low (0V) when ON (Normal polarity) or high (5V) when ON (Inverted polarity).

The PCI-1407 provides only a single TTL output (Shock) through the BNC connector marked TRIG.

**Onset/Duration array.** In the text controls at the bottom of the Protocol Window, you may specify up to 50 different stimulus epochs for each protocol. For each stimulus epoch, you must specify an onset time and duration. Onset and duration are entered as **seconds**. A stimulus will not be delivered if its onset time exceeds the Trial Duration setting.

<b>1</b>	3-180	30	4-360	30	3-540	30		
<b>2</b>	210	5	390	5	570	5		
<b>3</b>								
<b>4</b>								

**Multiple Sound Stimuli.** If you plan to use more than one type of sound stimulus (with different frequencies, pure tone or noise, different loudness, etc), then you must first set up the different sounds in the [stimulus configuration window](#). It is possible to configure up to 10 different sounds. In the case that more than one is to be selected, you must specify which sound is to be used for each stimulus epoch in the protocol setup as shown below. Simply prefix the Onset time with the sound number and a "-". In the example below, the first epoch will present sound 2, the second sound 4 and the third sound 3. **If no prefix is given (as in the above example), sound 1 will be used by default.**

**Protocol Chart Display.** In addition to entering text into the stimulus array, you may also configure stimuli using the diagram at the top of the window.

**Click and drag** on the stimulus graph to place a new stimulus.

**Double-click** on an existing stimulus to delete it.

**Click and drag** on the **left** edge of a stimulus to change its onset time

**Click and drag** on the **right** edge of a stimulus to change its duration

**Right-click** a **sound stimulus** (top row) to change which [configured sound stimulus](#) will be delivered.

**Epoch.** Onset and duration times are visible only for 8 epochs at a time. To view epochs other than the first 8, use the **Epoch** numerical control or the **>>** and **<<** buttons on the left side of the window. Also, with the NumLock control on your keyboard off, the **<End>** and **<PageDn>** keys will scroll the Onset/Duration array right or left.

**Clear all.** This button will delete all stimuli from the current protocol.

**Resolution.** For most protocols, onset times and durations of stimuli can be specified in whole numbers of seconds. In this case, set the Resolution popup-menu to "1 sec". If you wish to specify stimulus times

with more precision, select "0.1 sec". The resolution of the text in the stimulus array will reflect the choice, as will the resolution of dragging stimuli in the diagram.

To save the changes made to the protocols and exit the Protocol Window, select the **Save and Exit**. To exit the window without saving any changes, select the **Quit** menu.

## Camera Setup Window

FreezeFrame can be used in 4 different configurations, depending on the hardware being used.

**1 camera - 1 chamber.** In the simplest configuration, FreezeFrame uses a single camera to view a single shock chamber.

**2 cameras- 2 chambers.** If a PCI-1408 or PCI-1409 is being used, you may connect 2 cameras to the board, each one viewing a different chamber.

**4 cameras- 4 chambers.** If a PCI-1408 or PCI-1409 is being used, you may connect 4 cameras to the board, each one viewing a different chamber.

**1 camera- 4 chambers.** With any of the boards, you may configure FreezeFrame to view 4 chambers with a single camera. In this case, the image is divided into 4 quadrants and the motion detection algorithm is performed independently on each quadrant. The chambers must be placed in a 2 x 2 array so as to fit one into each quadrant of the camera image. This can be a side-by-side array with the camera looking down from above, or a 2-up 2-down array with the camera looking from the front. In this case, the upper two chambers can be set back from the lower two slightly, so that the camera can look from in front, and slightly above the array (see Camera Setup).

**Frame rate.** The default setting for frame rate is 3.75 frames per second. A higher frame rate increases temporal resolution, but decreases the amount of time the animal has to move between frames. Smaller movements mean reduced sensitivity. As a result, when higher frame rates are selected, FreezeFrame measures movement between alternate frames (7.5 fps) or every third or fourth frame (11.25 or 15 fps). Higher frame rates therefore do not affect the amount of freezing that is detected. Higher frame rates generate proportionately larger video files.

**Digital Gain.** The default setting for the digital gain of the camera is 128. Use this default setting unless your light levels are so dim that opening the lens iris all the way and increasing the CDS gain still does not give a bright enough image. In that case you can increase the digital gain until the image on the screen is bright enough to see clearly. The maximum setting is 255.

**Line Frequency.** Set to 50 Hz (Europe, Africa, Asia (except Japan and Taiwan), South America, and Australia) or 60 Hz (North America, Japan, and Taiwan) depending on the frequency of the power or mains circuits in your area. This synchronizes the camera frame rate to the power line to the power-line flicker in the lights. If you see rapid flickering in the images, check this setting.

## Stimulus Configuration

### Sounds

**Selector.** You may configure up to 10 different sound stimuli, each of which can be selected for any stimulus epoch in a [protocol](#). Select one of the 10 sound stimuli to configure by clicking on the list box to the left of the window. Sounds once configured are stored in a file and need not be updated each time the program is used.

**Hiss/Tone.** To the left, set whether the sound stimulus will be a white noise (hiss) or pure tone.

**Frequency.** If a tone, use the Frequency control to set the tone's pitch.

**Amplitude.** Adjusts the relative amplitude of the sound, from off (0) to the loudest your amplifier can produce (100).

**Pulse.** When on, the sound will be presented discontinuously during a stimulus epoch. Three controls appear for setting the pulse parameters:

**Rise Time.** At sound onset, the amplitude will increase linearly to the maximum over the number of milliseconds indicated. Similarly, at offset the amplitude diminishes linearly from the maximum to reach zero at the end of the sound.

**Frequency.** Determines the frequency of pulsation.

**Duty cycle.** Determines for what percentage of each cycle the pulsing sound is on.

**Test.** Momentarily turns on the sound as currently configured. If no sound can be heard, check the speaker connections, volume setting and sound card configuration in Windows.

### Shocker and auxiliary stimulus outputs

**Invert.** 1 (PCI-1405/7) or 3 (PCI-1408/9/10) slide switches will appear that allow you to determine the polarity of the outputs for the shock (stimulus 2) and the auxiliary outputs (stimulus 3 and 4). When in the **Norm** position, the corresponding input will be low (0V) when off and high (5V) when on. In the **Invert** position, the stimulus will be inverted.

**Test.** While pressed, puts all three outputs in their ON state (high for **Norm** and low for **Invert**). Otherwise, the outputs are in their OFF state (low for **Norm** and high for **Invert**).

### File Formats

FreezeFrame store several different types of files. All files are created automatically in the current Data directory, which is directory in which the currently selected Data file is located using the FILE->OPEN menu item in the main FreezeFrame window.

**FFDD data files.** The frame-by-frame motion index is stored in a file with the extension "ffdd". When the data file is opened from the FreezeView program, the entire list of animals contained in that file is displayed. The ffdd file also stores the protocol used for each trial.

For multicomputer systems, the Master computer's data file stores data from all animals on both the Master and Remote computers. On the Remote computers, only the data collected by that computer is stored in the data file.

**Log file.** FreezeFrame creates a text file that contains a list of all the animals run.

**FFII Image Files.** With the Save Images option selected (Settings->Save Images menu item in the main FreezeFrame window) FreezeFrame creates one image file for each animal in a trial. The name of the file is the name typed into the corresponding element of the **Name** control in the main window, and the extension is ".ffii". Each image is stored as a 2-D array of 8-bit unsigned integers, preceded by 2 4-byte integers that specify the size of the array. These bytes are stored in big-endian format (most significant byte first). Images can be converted to QuickTime format (with the extension .mov) using the FreezeView program.

Image files tend to be large. At 4 frames per second, the 320 x 240 pixel arrays accumulate at 18 MBytes per minute. If you are planning to save image files, a large hard drive and a mass storage backup device such as a fast CD or DVD writer are helpful.

**FFTT threshold files.** When you analyze the trials stored in a data file, the thresholds you choose for freezing are stored in a file with the same name as the data file, but with the fftt extension.

# FreezeView Trial Viewer (Data Analysis)

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## Opening a data file

**Open File.** Click on the FILE -> OPEN menu item to select a file for analysis (or double-click filename indicator). A standard Open File Dialog lets you navigate through the Windows file system to find a data file with the .ffdd extension.

## Selecting an animal for analysis

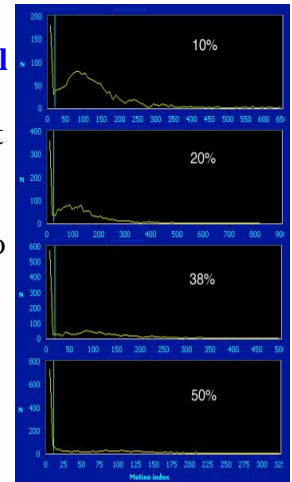
Once a file is selected, the **Animals** list box at the right of the window shows the animals for which data were collected. Select an animal either by clicking on it or by using the **UP and DOWN arrow keys** to scroll through the list. As you scroll through the list, the displays are updated to show the data for the selected animal. Animals for which image files are available (in the same folder as the data file) are prefixed with \*.

## Displays

- The motion index as a function of time. The data in the motion index graph can be written to a spreadsheet readable file by selecting the ANALYSIS -> EXPORT INDEX GRAPH menu item. **This graph is a control:**
  - Use the horizontal cursor to set the Freeze threshold.
  - Use the vertical cursor to scroll the video.
  - Double-click to jump the video to that time.
  - Right-click to expand the graph vertically. This can help to identify the reproducible minimum value that occurs during freezing. Set the freezing threshold just above this value.
- Freezing as a function of time. Freezing is set to 0 or 1 depending on whether the motion index exceeds the freezing threshold.
- The stimuli as a function of time. The times during which each of the 4 possible different stimuli are on are shown as yellow, cyan, red and green fills.
- A histogram of the motion index (lower left graph). The data in the motion index histogram can be written to a spreadsheet readable file by selecting the ANALYSIS -> EXPORT HISTOGRAM menu item.
- Percent freezing. The numeric indicators show the percent time the animal spent frozen (see [here](#) for details)
  - while each of the stimuli was on (**stimulus 1, stimulus 2...**),
  - while each of the stimuli was off (**not stimulus 2, not stimulus 2...**),
  - for the whole trial (**Total**), and
  - while all stimuli were off (**no stimuli**).

## Setting the Freeze Parameters

**Freeze Threshold (Histogram cursor)** A criterion level must be chosen for deciding when the animal has frozen. Set the freeze threshold by dragging the **vertical blue cursor** in the histogram display (lower left), dragging the **horizontal blue cursor** in the Freeze Index graph, or by using the digital **Threshold** indicator. The value is chosen by examining the motion index histogram. For most animals, there will be a large, narrow peak starting at 0 (freezing), and a second, broader peak between 50 and 100 (activity). There will be, in addition, a distinct trough between the two peaks in the range of 20-30. The threshold should be set to the value of the trough. To the right are shown examples of 5 histograms with the threshold set properly. The white text indicates the % freezing for the trial. Note the different scales for the different graphs.



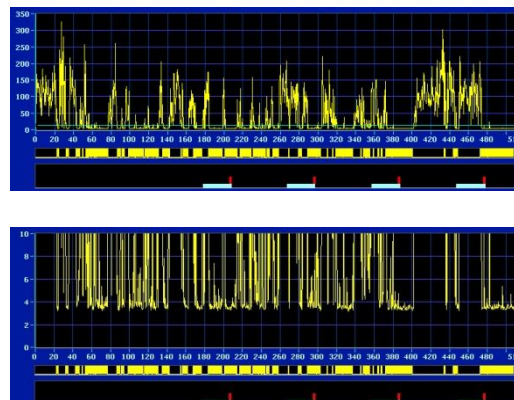
Some animals freeze very little (10% graph) and so have only a small peak or no peak at all at zero. Some animals freeze almost all the time (50% graph), and so the peak near zero will dominate with only scattered points at higher values.

You may set the threshold for each animal individually, or use the **Set all** button to set the threshold for all trials in the file to the current value. But if you use the **Set all** button, check each trial to make sure the thresholds are valid.

**Thresholds are saved in a file with the same name as the data file, but with a different extension ".fft".** When moving data files to a different folder, bring the corresponding ".fft" file along in order to maintain the previously set thresholds.

You can often see the appropriate threshold by looking at the Freeze Index vs. Time graph (upper right of the window) at a high vertical gain. To increase the vertical gain in the index graph in order to examine the periods of inactivity in more detail, right-click the graph and select the "Expand Vertically" item from the popup menu. The y-axis will expand so that the y-value of the point you right-clicked on is now at the top of the graph. Select Autoscale vertically to zoom out again.

Below are images of the Freeze Index graph for a trial at normal vertical gain and then expanded to see the bouts of freezing in more detail. When the threshold is set properly, small changes in either direction should have only small effects on the Total % Freezing



## Bout (s)

Bout length is the duration that a single freezing episode must equal or exceed in order to be counted. With Bouts set to 1, for example, episodes of freezing (that is, episodes during which the motion index is continually below threshold) that last only 0.75 s or less will be treated as if the animal had not frozen at all during that period. As **Bout** and **Threshold** are changed, the freeze graph and % Freeze indicators will be updated to reflect the new parameters.

## Displaying images

If an image file for the selected animal is present in the same directory as the open data file, several buttons will appear over the image window (lower right) that can be used to play the image file as a movie.

**Time cursor.** The vertical blue cursor in the Freeze Index graph indicates the current frame being displayed, and it can be used to scroll through the video. **Drag the cursor** to scroll through the video quickly. **Double-Click** anywhere in the Index graph to jump the video to that time.

### Playback controls.

> Plays the image at near real time, starting at the time in the trial set by the vertical blue cursor in the Freeze Index graph (top). Click the control again (or click the || control) to stop the playback.

>> Plays the image as fast as the computer will go. Playback starts at the time in the trial set by the vertical blue cursor in the Freeze Index graph (top). Click the control again (or click the || control) to stop the playback.

>| Advances one frame per click of the control.

<< Plays the image in reverse as fast as the hard drive and processor will go.

|| Stops playback.

**TV/Difference.** You may view the images as recorded, or as the pixel-by-pixel difference between the current image and the previous image.

The VIDEO -> INVERT VERTICAL and INVERT HORIZONTAL menu items flip the image vertically and horizontally.

**Multicomputer Systems:** When analyzing data files on the Master computer, index data are available for all animals recorded on all computers. Images are only available for animals whose image files are located in the data file directory. To view images for animals recorded on the Remote computers, you must transfer the image files for those animals to the Master computer (to the same directory as the data file). Or run the analysis program on the Remote computer.

## Export Statistics (Analysis menu)

The program allows exporting of several statistical measures of freezing.

## Export Graphs (Analysis menu)

Select the Export Index Graph, Export Histogram, or Export Bout Histogram menu items from the Analysis menu to export the point-by-point values to an Excel-compatible file.

## Exporting QuickTime and AVI Movies/Compressing Image Files

It is possible to export QuickTime movies of all or part of a trial. These movies can be displayed in PowerPoint and other image presentation software. It is also possible to use QuickTime to compress the image files for viewing within FreezeView, greatly reducing the disk space required to store them.

## Exporting Analyses

### Image Formats

You can export a picture of any of the graphs in FreezeFrame and FreezeView. Right click on the graph and select Export Simplified Image... You can export the graph into the clipboard or to a file in BMP or EMF format. If you would like to edit the image in a drawing program like Adobe Illustrator, choose EPS format. When you open the exported EPS file in Illustrator, all the elements of the graph are grouped together. Separate them by selecting the graph, and choosing the menu item Object -> Clipping Mask-> Release. Then ungroup the elements (Object -> Ungroup). You can now select each element (the plot, the axes, the axis labels, etc) and change their colors, stroke width, etc.

### Excel Format

To Export data in Excel-readable text format, open the Analysis window by selecting the ANALYSIS -> EXPORT STATISTICS menu item in the main program window.

## Interval Type

There are 3 different ways to specify the intervals for analysis.

- **Fixed Interval.** Divides the trial into periods of equal duration. The interval duration is set in the **Interval (sec)** that appears when Fixed Intervals are chosen. A graph of the %Freeze as a function of time is shown.
- **Custom Interval.** You may specify any number of intervals of arbitrary start time and duration. First specify the **number of intervals**. Then fill in the onset time and duration of each interval in the corresponding text edit boxes.
- **By Stimuli.** This analysis is similar to the indicators in the main window. The analysis is performed on:
  - The total duration of the trial
  - The time during which stimulus 1 (the sound) is on
  - The time during which stimulus 2 (the shock) is on
  - The time during which stimulus 3 is on
  - The time during which stimulus 4 is on



- The time during which no stimulus is on
- The time during which stimulus 1 (the sound) is not on
- The time during which stimulus 2 (the shock) is not on
- The time during which stimulus 3 is not on
- The time during which stimulus 4 is not on

Note that a stimulus may come on more than once during a trial. If, for example, stimulus 1 is on for the first and 3rd minutes of a 6 minute trial, Stimulus 1 on include both of those minutes, and Stimulus 1 not on includes minutes 2, 4, 5, and 6.

## Analysis Parameter

- Once the intervals are chosen, the parameter for analysis must be chosen. The 4 choices are
- **Percent Freezing.** The percent of the time during which the animal was frozen.
- **Number of bouts.** The number of continuous bouts of freezing.
- **Mean bout interval.** The mean time between the start of consecutive bouts.
- **Mean bout duration.** The mean duration of bouts.

The selected parameter is calculated for each of the specified periods and displayed in the text box to the right of the window. Note that for all analyses, bouts of duration less than the **Bout duration** specified in the main window are excluded.

Note that when **By Stimuli** is the interval type chosen, the only analysis parameter available is Percent Freezing.

## Exporting

Pressing the **Export** button performs the chosen analysis on each one of the trials (animals) in the open experiment file. The resulting data are written to a comma-delimited (csv) file, which can be opened in Excel or other statistical programs. If the button labeled "**Open Excel**" is set to the ON position, the file created will be opened automatically in Excel (assuming Excel is installed on the computer).

## Trials in: Rows/Columns

This control determines the orientation of the data in the Excel spreadsheet.

## Compressing and Exporting Image Files to QuickTime and Windows Media Player

FreezeFrame saves images in an uncompressed or raw format in the \*.ffii files that are located in the same folder as the .fftt data file. In these files, the luminance value for each pixel of each frame is stored in a 320x240 2-dimensional array. This scheme has the advantage of being fast it preserves all of the information in the images. The disadvantages of the raw ffii files are their large size and their incompatibility with other video presentation and editing programs. FreezeView therefore contains 2

utilities for converting these raw image files to QuickTime or Windows Media Player video formats, compressing them at the same time.

**In order to create QuickTime and AVI movies, the Windows version of Apple's QuickTime Player must be installed on your computer.** It is available from Apple at <http://www.apple.com/quicktime>. Only the free QuickTime player is required, but QuickTime Pro is inexpensive (\$30) and provides some useful video editing tools.

## Creating QuickTime Movies

From the Main FreezeView window, you may export all or part of the video stream for the currently selected animal. The resulting QuickTime (.MOV) or AVI files can be read into PowerPoint, placed on web sites or used in other presentation software. To export:

- Use the **Video controls** to move the Time Cursor (vertical light blue line in Motion Index graph) to the start of the portion of the trial you would like to export. Or drag the Time cursor directly.
- Select the ANALYSIS -> EXPORT MOVIE menu item. A Compression Settings window will appear.
- Turn the AVI switch OFF (pointing left).
- Pick a Compression format using the **Format** pull-down menu. There are a daunting number of formats (codecs) available with QuickTime. We recommend [H.264](#) or [MPEG 4](#). Both are modern, high quality methods for video compression.
- Pick the level of compression using the **Quality** control. This setting will determine how compact the exported file will be. Low settings will give higher compression (smaller files), but lower image quality. Try exporting a short video clip with different settings to see which will suit your needs.
- Select the **Playback speed**. This will determine whether the video clip plays back in QuickTime at near real-time, twice real time, 3x or 4x real time.
- Click **OK** and Compression settings window will close.
- A file dialog will appear. Specify a **filename** for the exported image file. The appropriate extension (.MOV) will be appended automatically.
- Once the file dialog closes, in the main FreezeView window, the video control buttons will have changed color. Play the desired portion of the video using the now-green video control buttons (>| > >>). While the controls are green, each displayed frame of the video will be stored to the QuickTime file of the selected filename. When you move backward with << or < buttons, video is not recorded to the QuickTime file.
- Note that using the different play buttons does not affect the playback speed you will see when you play the file in the QuickTime player. They only affect how quickly the file is written and displayed in FreezeView. The **Playback Speed** control in the Compression Settings Window determines how fast the video will play in QuickTime.
- Click the red stop-playback button (||) to close the movie file.

To playback the newly created QuickTime or AVI video file, double-click its icon in Windows Explorer and it will open in the QuickTime Player. The file can also be imported into PowerPoint, html files or other multimedia files.

**Warning.** Do not try to overwrite an existing QuickTime file while that file is open in the QuickTime Player. An error will result.

## Creating AVI (Windows Media Player) files

- Follow the same procedure as above for generating a QuickTime Movie, but this time click the **AVI** button in the Set Compression window to ON (pointing right). The Compression Format will be set to None and the Quality will be set to 1024 (high).
- Click OK and create a QuickTime file using the playback controls in the Main Window, exactly as before.
- At the end of the movie (when you click the red Stop-Playback button), a dialog will open allowing you to create an AVI file from the QuickTime file you just created.
  - Set **Export** to **Movie to AVI**.
  - Set **Use** to **Most Recent Settings**.
  - Click the **Options** button and then **Video Setting** in the dialog to set the quality of the AVI file. For highest quality, select
    - **Compression Type: None**
    - **Depth: Millions of Colors**
    - **Quality: Best**.
- Once you click **Save** in the AVI dialog, the program will then read the QuickTime movie frame-by-frame, convert it to an AVI movie according to your settings, and save it to disk. Depending on how large the movie is, this could take some time.
- Double-click the AVI file in Windows to play it in Windows Media Player. You can also play it in the QuickTime Player.
- **Note:** The AVI movie is created from the QuickTime movie that is first saved to disk. To maintain the highest quality possible for the AVI movie, FreezeView chooses "None" for the QuickTime compression step. That is, when you set the AVI button to ON, the Compression Format is changed to None automatically. You can change this if you prefer to, but the changes will affect both the QuickTime and AVI files.

## Compressing the image files for playback in FreezeView

It is also possible to compress all the FreezeView image files associated with a data file in one batch operation. That is, you can copy all the images from each raw image file to compressed, QuickTime-compatible \*.MOV files. When you then play a video from within the FreezeView program, the images shown will come from the newly created QuickTime file rather than the original raw video file. The advantage is that the QuickTime files can be 10 or more times smaller than the ffii files, and so occupy less disk space. The disadvantage is that the compressed images are not quite as sharp as the originals, depending on the level of compression chosen. As with files written one at a time with the EXPORT MOVIE function, the image files created en masse can also be played in the QuickTime Viewer. To compress all the image files in the folder containing the currently opened data file:

- Select the VIEW->COMPRESS IMAGE FILES menu item.
- The Compression Settings Window will appear.
- Pick a Compression format using the **Format** pull-down menu. We recommend **H.264** or **MPEG 4** (MP4).
- Pick the level of compression using the **Compression** control. The setting will determine how compact the exported file will be. Low settings will give higher compression, lower image quality, and smaller files. Try exporting a short video clip with different settings to see which will suit your needs. MP4 with a compression setting of about 350 gives 10-fold compression and yet gives a very nice image.

- Select the **Playback speed**. This will determine whether the video clip plays back in QuickTime at near real-time, twice real time, 3x or 4x real time. It will NOT affect the speed at which the files play in the FreezeView program itself.
- Click **OK** and the Compression settings window will close (or select **Cancel** to stop the compression process).
- A new window will open. The uncompressed images are displayed as they are being compressed and stored. Various indicators show the file currently being compressed, the progress through the list of files, the progress in the current compression, the compression format being used and the compression ratio achieved (that is, the size of the compressed file expressed as a percent of the size of the raw file). You may cancel the process at any time.
- When all the ffii files in the folder have been compressed, the window will close.

During the compression process each file named <animal>.ffii, is compressed and stored in a new file called <animal>.MOV. Whenever a file called <animal>.MOV is present in the data folder, FreezeView will automatically use it when displaying images, even if the corresponding <animal>.ffii file is also present. You may therefore discard the original ffii files once you have decided that you are satisfied with the level of compression and the quality of the images. We recommend that you archive the original files on CD, DVD or tape if possible. But this is not required.

If you wish to go back to working from the original .ffii files, you must remove or delete the .mov files from the trial folder.

## Retracking a Trial (FreezeView)

**Warning: Retracking modifies the data file. It is strongly recommended that you work on a copy of the data file, or back up the data file before proceeding.**

On occasion, you might want to re-calculate the Motion Index for a trial. You may want to use a different calculation method (Fear Conditioning, Swim Test, or Tail Suspension), adjust the parameters used (Swim Test), or change the portion of the images being used for the calculation (Windowing). To retrack a trial, select it in the Trial List in the main window, and select Retrack (Cmd-R) from the Analysis menu.

The trial will be highlighted in the trial list of the Retrack Menu.

Select the Analysis you prefer. If you select Swim Test, you can adjust the pixel threshold (Default = 50).

Set the Windowing using the cursors on the image. The cursors will start out showing the windowing original used when the data were collected (or last retracked). Even after adjusting the cursors you can **Revert** to the windowing last used. **Select All** to use the entire image (the cursors will disappear). Click the **Find** button to bring the cursors onto the image if they are not visible.

Click the **Go** button to start the retracking.

Alternatively, you can retrack all the trials in the file by clicking the **Retrack All** button. You will need to decide whether you want to use the windowing set by the cursors in the image window, or whether you want to use the Windowing stored in the file with each trial.

## **Trouble shooting**

### **No image**

The most common trouble is the lack of an image in the image window. When this happens, the program gets very sluggish to respond.

Check to make sure the camera is connected to the computer properly and that the power is connected to the camera.

Once you check the connections for faults, stop and restart FreezeFrame to see if the image now appears.

Another convenient way to troubleshoot the camera input is using the Measurement and Automation Explorer that comes with the PCI-140X drivers. The icon for this program is on the desktop. Choose the Devices window, and then the 140X board. Use Snap or Grab to view the image from each camera.

### **Portions of the image (usually a horizontal strip) appear black.**

Open the Measurement and Automation Explorer ("MAX", its icon is installed on the desktop by NI-IMAQ).

Open the Devices and Interfaces folder and select the image acquisition board (PCI-140X).

Select Channel 0 and click the Grab button in the toolbar. Expand the MAX window so that you are able to see the entire image.

If the black areas appear in the image, click Properties button in the toolbar and adjust the image limits (top, left, width and height) until the black areas disappear. Width should be set to 640, height to 480, and left to approximately 115.

### **The program seems not to be detecting small movements of the animal.**

In order for FreezeFrame to be maximally sensitive to movement, the image of the shock cage should fill as much of the image as possible. In the 1-camera/4-chamber system, this can sometimes be difficult. Keep the 4 chambers as close together as possible by sliding them toward the center of the image, and raising the lower set of cages to be just underneath the upper set. In some cases, it might be necessary to convert to a 4-camera system so that each cage can be individually adjusted to fill it corresponding image.

### **The shocker does not seem to turn on at the appropriate times.**

The usual cause for this problem is improper connection of the trigger output of the image acquisition board to the shocker. To make sure that the FreezeFrame program and its output is functioning properly, disconnect the trigger output from the shocker and measure voltage on the output with a voltmeter or oscilloscope. It should be within a few tenths of a volt of 0V when off, and within a few tenths of 5V

when on (or vice versa if the **invert** control is on in the Stimulus Setup Window. If the voltages are correct, then contact the manufacturer of your shocker to help with the proper connections.

### **Trials seem to give inconsistent or highly variable results.**

The most common cause of inconsistent results from trial to trial is problems in delivering the shock to the animals. The shock cage is a harsh environment for electrical connections: urine is very corrosive and the contacts between connectors and shock bars often fail. Check the video of trials in which animals are not freezing much to see that they are receiving the shock. Use an oscilloscope or voltmeter to check that each bar is receiving the shock signal. (It is good practice to do this on a regular basis, as often as once per week.) Clean the contacts in the electrical pathway between the shocker and the grid bars. On removable floor trays, check to see that the bars have not slid forward, especially the bars near the sides of the cages. If they have, they will no longer make good contact.

A second (though less common) problem that might cause inconsistent results can occur if the program is not detecting motion reliably. See the item "The program seems not to be detecting small movements of the animal" above.

### **No data from Remote computer (MultiComputer Systems only)**

Check the cables that connect the Master computer to the Remote. COM1 on the Master computer should be connected to COM1 of Remote 1, and COM2 of the Master computer should be connected to COM1 of Remote 2.

### **USB Digital Output Pin Out**

<u>PIN</u>	<u>FUNCTION</u>
------------	-----------------

- |   |                |
|---|----------------|
| 1 | GND            |
| 2 | TTL out (3.66) |
| 3 | Unused (NC)    |
| 4 | +24V switched  |
| 5 | +24V steady    |
| 6 | Unused (NC)    |

