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We are pursuing two different recorder technologies (instrumentation-type longitudinal and video cassette), and some of the terminology of the two is conflicting. Also, some jargon developed in connection with VLBI conflicts with the recorder terminology. To minimize confusion (rather than create more, I hope), I suggest we use the definitions given here.

**CHANNEL:** a single signal derived from the receivers after all frequency conversion and filtering. Normally, this will be at baseband. Each such signal will be digitized (i.e., sampled and quantized); a "channel" may be either the analog or digital signal. When quantized to more than two levels, the samples may be encoded into a single data stream or into two or more data streams, but in any case they represent a single channel.

**TRACK:** a single signal actually written to tape or read from tape. Each tape transport will write one or more tracks simultaneously. Longitudinal machines use one head per track, whereas VCRs use two.

**FRAME:** a continuous set of samples from a single channel, organized into a group to which an identifying header is attached; the header is considered part of the frame. (This follows MkIII terminology.) Note that frames and headers are associated with channels and not necessarily with tracks.

**SCAN (VCR machines only):** the data written continuously by a single head during one pass over the tape.

**BLOCK:** a continuous set of symbols from a single track, organized into a group for track synchronization. Longitudinal machines might have a block length equal to an entire reel of tape, but shorter blocks might be useful. VCRs will have blocks no longer than one scan, to allow for head switching. A block may contain synchronization information in addition to the data symbols. Note that blocks are associated with tracks and not necessarily with channels; however, in the special case of exactly one track per channel, a block may be one or more frames.

Notice that "channel" and "frame" apply to the organization of signals in a way that is independent of recorder technology, and should remain applicable even for satellite links, video disks, or whatever else the future may bring. The remaining terms are specific to tape equipment; those definitions apply only in the context of discussions of the internal design of tape-based recording and playback equipment.