

Figure 2: Statistics of seeing measurements before and after summit levelling. Seeing is computed for equivalent 20-min exposures obtained at $0.5 \mu\text{m}$ at zenith with a perfect large telescope.

inducing an artificial increase of local seeing particularly sensitive in extremely good overall conditions.

Such local effects are illustrated in Figure 2, comparing one and a half

month of measurements at the northern edge of the telescope area with the statistics available for the Paranal peak until the disruption of measurements in July 1991. While the upper tail of the

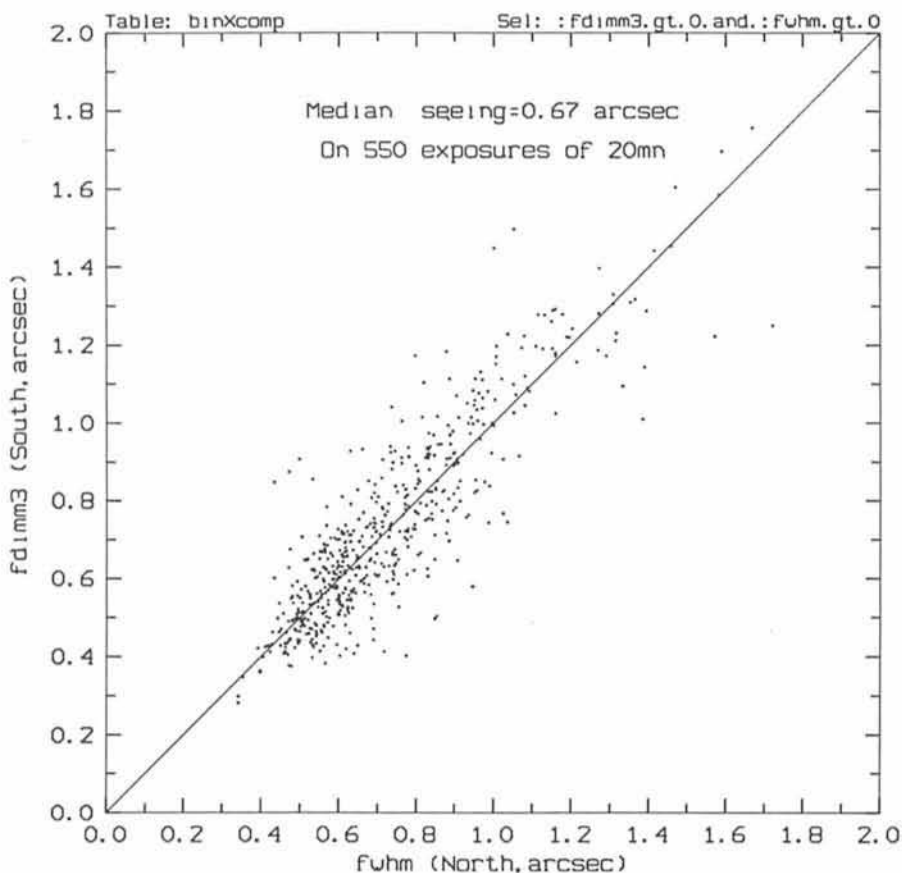


Figure 3: Comparison of seeing measurements made at the southern and northern edges of the telescope area.

probability distribution (seeing is computed for equivalent 20-min exposures at $0.5 \mu\text{m}$ at zenith) is virtually unchanged, the five percentile increases from 0.37 arcsec at 5 m above ground to 0.44 arcsec at 1 m above ground.

Another identical system (DIMM3) was used in the same conditions as DIMM1 to monitor the southern edge of the telescope area. One month of common data summarized in Figure 3 did not permit to detect any permanent differential effect related to the position with respect to the incident wind flow. The spread of the regression is however linked to a sporadic increase of local turbulence at either location, the strongest events taking place at low ($< 2 \text{ m/s}$) wind speed.

With a median seeing of 0.66 arcsec at 1 m above ground, Paranal has clearly survived the blasting. More seeing observations will be made at 5 m height on a tower currently under design at the Observatory of Capodimonte, Italy. Strange as it appears, the next threat for site quality will be the VLT itself. This is why great care is taken in the design of the observatory to avoid heat and cold sources both inside and outside the enclosures.

We thank the VLT Site and Buildings Group for providing the infrastructure at Paranal. The monitors are operated by the Paranal Meteorology team composed of F. Gomez, D. Mazat and A. Vargas.

Tentative Time-table of Council Sessions and Committee Meetings in 1993

March 30	Finance Committee
April 1	Council
May 3-4	Users Committee
May 6-7	Scientific Technical Committee
May 10-11	Finance Committee
May 27-28	Observing Programmes Committee, Copenhagen
June 1-2	Council
November 4-5	Scientific Technical Committee
November 8-9	Finance Committee
November 25-26	Observing Programmes Committee
December 1-2	Council

All meetings will take place in Garching, unless stated otherwise.