
Ultra High Sensitivity Aerosol Spectrometer Airborne (UHSAS-A)

**DMT Model UHSAS-A
0.060 – 1.0 microns**

Operator Manual

DOC-0211, Rev D

Software Version 4.1.0



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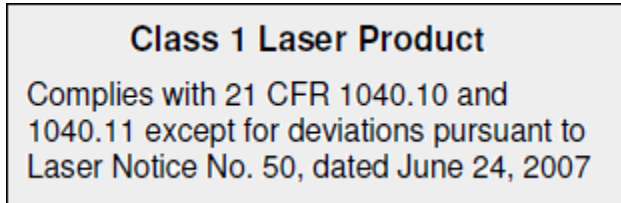
Warranty

The seller warrants that the equipment supplied will be free from defects in material and workmanship for a period of one year from the confirmed date of purchase of the original buyer. The probe owner will pay for shipping to DMT, while DMT covers the return shipping expense.

Consumable components, such as tubing, filters, pump diaphragms and Nafion humidifier are not covered by this warranty.

Laser Safety

The UHSAS-A is a Class I Laser Product. The following label is located on the electronics mounting plate.



STRICT OBSERVANCE OF THE FOLLOWING WARNING LABELS IS ADVISED.

This instrument is a Class I laser product with embedded Class IV pump and main lasers. **CAUTION:** Use of control or adjustments or performance of procedures other than specified in this manual may result in hazardous radiation exposure.



This label is located on both sides of the optical block and the arrow points to the cleaning ports.

Laser Characteristics

	Pump Laser	Main Laser
Wavelength	797 nm	1053 nm
Maximum power	1.6 W	- 50 mW for leakage through mirror - 1100 W for recirculating power
Maximum exposure time		- 1/10 second for 50 mW - 10 ⁻⁹ second for 1100 W

An identification label is located in the electronics mounting plate.



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M/N: UHSAS	System Power: 100-240VAC, 50-60 HZ
S/N: 0704-011	US Patent #5,889,589
April 2007	Boulder, CO, USA

Table of Contents

1.0	Product Description	8
1.1	Introduction	8
1.2	Specifications and Features.....	9
1.3	Electrical Specifications.....	9
1.4	Physical Specifications.....	9
1.5	Operating Limits.....	10
2.0	Theory of Operation	10
2.1	Optical System	11
2.1.1	<i>The Laser</i>	<i>11</i>
2.1.2	<i>The Detection System</i>	<i>12</i>
2.1.3	<i>The Mechanical Housing.....</i>	<i>12</i>
2.2	Flow System	14
2.3	Analog Electronics.....	15
2.3.1	<i>Particle Signal Amplification and Tracking</i>	<i>15</i>
2.3.2	<i>Laser Power Monitoring</i>	<i>15</i>
2.4	Digital Electronics System.....	16
2.4.1	<i>ADCs and Peak Height Analysis.....</i>	<i>16</i>
2.4.2	<i>Monitoring and Control</i>	<i>17</i>
2.5	Support PC.....	18
3.0	Unpacking and Setting up the UHSAS Airborne	18
4.0	Using the Instrument	20
4.1	Start-Up.....	20
4.2	Shutdown / Power Off Procedure	25
5.0	Calibration.....	26
5.1	Calibration Overview.....	26
5.1.1	<i>Relative Gain Calibration</i>	<i>26</i>
5.1.2	<i>Absolute Calibration.....</i>	<i>26</i>
5.2	Calibration Procedure	28
5.2.1	<i>Reasons for Calibration</i>	<i>28</i>
5.2.2	<i>Step One: Relative Gain Calibration</i>	<i>28</i>
5.2.3	<i>Step Two: Absolute Calibration.....</i>	<i>30</i>
5.3	Calibration Confirmation	32
5.3.1	<i>Particle Size Calibration Confirmation</i>	<i>32</i>
5.3.2	<i>Flow Rate Calibration Confirmation</i>	<i>32</i>
6.0	Safety Procedures and Troubleshooting.....	33

6.1	Safety Procedures	33
6.2	Troubleshooting	33
7.0	Cleaning the Laser Optics	34
8.0	Communications.....	38
Part II: Software.....		38
9.0	Map Tab	39
10.0	Histogram Tab	42
10.1	Autoscaling	44
11.0	Controls Tab.....	44
12.0	Configuration Tab.....	45
13.0	Calibration Tab	50
13.1	Calibration Curve Sub-tab.....	50
13.1.1	<i>Calibration Points Control</i>	<i>51</i>
13.1.2	<i>Calibration Curve</i>	<i>51</i>
13.1.3	<i>Control for Points Outside the Power-Law</i>	<i>52</i>
13.2	G3:G2 Gain, G2:G1 Gain, G1:G0 Gain (the Relative-Gain Sub-tabs)	52
Appendix A:	Output File Data Channels	54
Appendix B:	Cables	56
Appendix C:	Anti-Icing Options.....	57
Appendix D:	Revisions to Manual	58
Appendix E:	Interconnect Wiring Diagram	Not Included Online
Appendix F:	Signal and Power Wiring Diagram.....	Not Included Online

Table of Figures

Figure 1:	The UHSAS Airborne	8
Figure 2:	Block Diagram of UHSAS.....	11
Figure 3:	Side View of Optical Block	13
Figure 4:	Top View of Optical Block.....	13
Figure 5:	Schematic Diagram of Flow System	14
Figure 6:	Block Diagram of Analog Electronics.....	16
Figure 7:	Ground-Test Cable	19

Figure 8: Extra Tubing on Inlet Line	19
Figure 9: The Controls Tab on the UHSAS Software	21
Figure 10: Attaching the Bench-Test Cable.....	22
Figure 11: UHSAS Airborne with Zero-Filter in Place.....	22
Figure 12: 100-nm Particle Distribution on a Properly Calibrated Instrument	23
Figure 13: 100-nm Particle Distribution on an Instrument that Needs Calibration	24
Figure 14: Ambient-Air Distribution on a Properly Calibrated Instrument ..	24
Figure 15: Ambient-Air Distribution on an Instrument that Needs Calibration	25
Figure 16: Example Calibration Curve.....	27
Figure 17: Running a Relative Gain Calibration.....	29
Figure 18: Calibrating the UHSAS.....	31
Figure 19: Preparing to Remove the Top of the Probe.....	35
Figure 20: Opening the Exhaust Line	36
Figure 21: Loosening Screws on Cleaning Port.....	36
Figure 22: Cleaning the Optic	37
Figure 23: Map Tab	39
Figure 24: Map Tab with Password-Protected Options	40
Figure 25: Histogram Tab	42
Figure 26: Controls Tab	44
Figure 27: Configuration Tab.....	46
Figure 28: Calibration Curve Sub-Tab	50
Figure 29: A Relative Gain Sub-Tab	53

1.0 Product Description

1.1 Introduction

The UHSAS is an optical-scattering, laser-based aerosol particle spectrometer for sizing particles in the 0.060 - 1 μm range. The instrument, which is pictured in Figure 1, counts particles in up to 100 user-specified sizing bins.



Figure 1: The UHSAS Airborne

The UHSAS is also available as a ground-based instrument. Both airborne and ground-based versions can be ordered with two additional features: bidirectional and particle-by-particle capabilities. The bidirectional feature allows another computer to have limited control of the UHSAS and use the instrument to acquire data. The particle-by-particle feature allows the UHSAS to generate additional output data, specifically information on the size and inter-particle time of individual particles. Documentation on these features is available in *UHSAS: Bidirectional Option Appendix (DOC-0240)* and *UHSAS: Particle-by-Particle (PbP) Option Appendix (DOC-0241)*.

1.2 Specifications and Features

Technique:	Aerosol spectrometry
Measured Particle Size Range:	0.060 – 1 μm
Maximum Count Rate:	3,000 per second
Counting Efficiency:	99%
Number of channels:	100 max: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 99 standard channels (98 if both overflow and underflow are enabled) • One overflow channel and one underflow channel
Flow Range:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sample flow: 10 – 100 Sccm • Sheath airflow setting: 700 ccm at sea-level, 590 Sccm in Boulder, CO
Laser Type:	Solid state pumped Nd ³⁺ :YLF, 1053 nm λ
Data Recording:	Output file written to computer hard drive

1.3 Electrical Specifications

Power Requirements:	100-240 VAC, 47-63 Hz
Anti-Ice Power Requirements:	28 VDC, 215 watts
Fuse:	BUSS fuse, GMA-2A

1.4 Physical Specifications

Size:	16.5 cm diameter x 98 cm long
Weight:	16 kg (preliminary)

1.5 Operating Limits

Temperature:	-40 to 40 °C
Altitude:	Sea level to 12 km
Relative humidity:	Non-condensing

2.0 Theory of Operation

The instrument's laser illuminates particles, which scatter light. The system captures the peak light signals that are generated. These signals are used for particle sizing, since the amount of light scattered correlates strongly with particle size.

The instrument consists of 5 general subsystems, described in this section:

- 1) *Main optical subsystem*—generates the laser light, detects the light scattered by particles, and provides a mechanical enclosure for the optical system and for delivery of the sample aerosol
- 2) *Flow system*—brings the sample aerosol through the optical interaction region, controls and measures the flows
- 3) *Analog electronics system*—amplifies and processes the particle signals
- 4) *Digital electronics system*—analyzes particle signals, bins signals according to user-specified bin mappings, generates a histogram of particles in the specified bins, and communicates with the PC and system monitor/control functions
- 5) *Support PC*—allows user to control instrument and collect and report data

Figure 2 shows a block diagram of how these components work together.

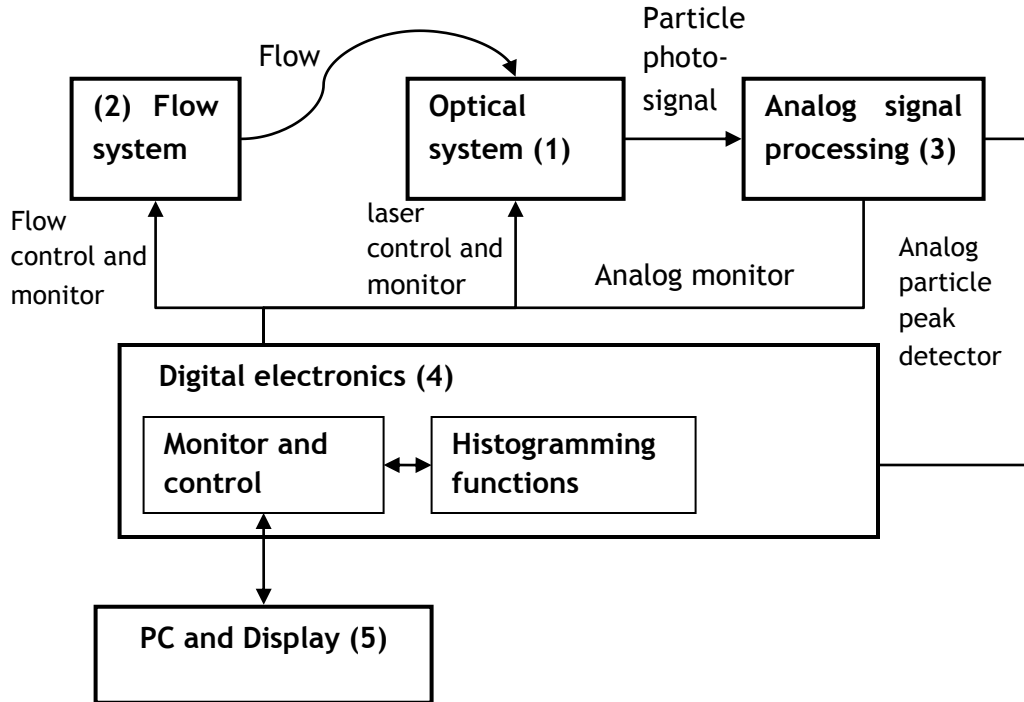


Figure 2: Block Diagram of UHSAS

2.1 Optical System

The optical system consists of several parts: the laser and associated components and optics; the detection system, including collection optics, photodetectors, and reference monitoring; and the mechanical housing.

2.1.1 The Laser

The laser is a semiconductor-diode-pumped Nd³⁺:YLF solid-state laser. It operates in the fundamental (TEM₀₀) spatial mode on a 1054 nm laser line with an intra-cavity power of ~1 kW. The pump laser is a temperature-controlled 1 W single-stripe diode at 800 nm, driven by a stable current source. The Nd³⁺:YLF laser is a high quality factor optical resonator built around an Nd³⁺:YLF active laser crystal, pumped end-on by the diode laser. The laser mirrors have reflectivities near 0.99999 at the lasing wavelength. The laser mode has a 1/e² intensity diameter of 600 μm. The standing wave laser mode is perpendicular to the flow of particles; the light is linearly polarized with the electric field vector parallel to the flow of particles. Particle scatter is collected in a direction perpendicular to both the particle flow and the laser standing-wave; see Figure 3 and Figure 4 for side and top views of the optical block.

2.1.2 The Detection System

The detection system consists of two pairs of Mangin collection optics capable of collecting light over a large solid angle. The Mangins image the space at which the sample flow intersects the laser mode. The first pair of collection optics, the primary scattering detection system, images onto an avalanche photodiode (APD) for detecting the smallest particles. The other pair, the secondary scattering detection system, images onto a low-gain PIN photodiode for detecting particles in the upper size range of the instrument. The two detection systems are located on the opposite sides of the optic block (see Figure 4).

Each detector is amplified in a current-to-voltage stage that feeds into the analog electronics system. The amplification allows the system to detect particles as small as 55 nm and 1-10 counts/minute at a zero-count rate. At this particle size, the peak scatter rate corresponds to 100 pW of detected light power at the detector. The size sensitivity is limited by several factors, including a fundamental noise process from the photon-shot noise on the detected molecular scatter from background gas, and a fundamental noise process from the Johnson noise in the photodiode transimpedance feedback resistor.

The imaging optics have an acceptance aperture of 23 mm diameter at a distance of 8 mm from the interaction region. The Mangin reflectors are aluminum coated with reflectivity of 0.9.

In addition to the primary and secondary detection systems, the UHSAS has a reference detector. This detector serves as a reference for changes in laser power.

2.1.3 The Mechanical Housing

The laser and detection optics are built into the optical block, which is a sealed mechanical enclosure. See the following figures.

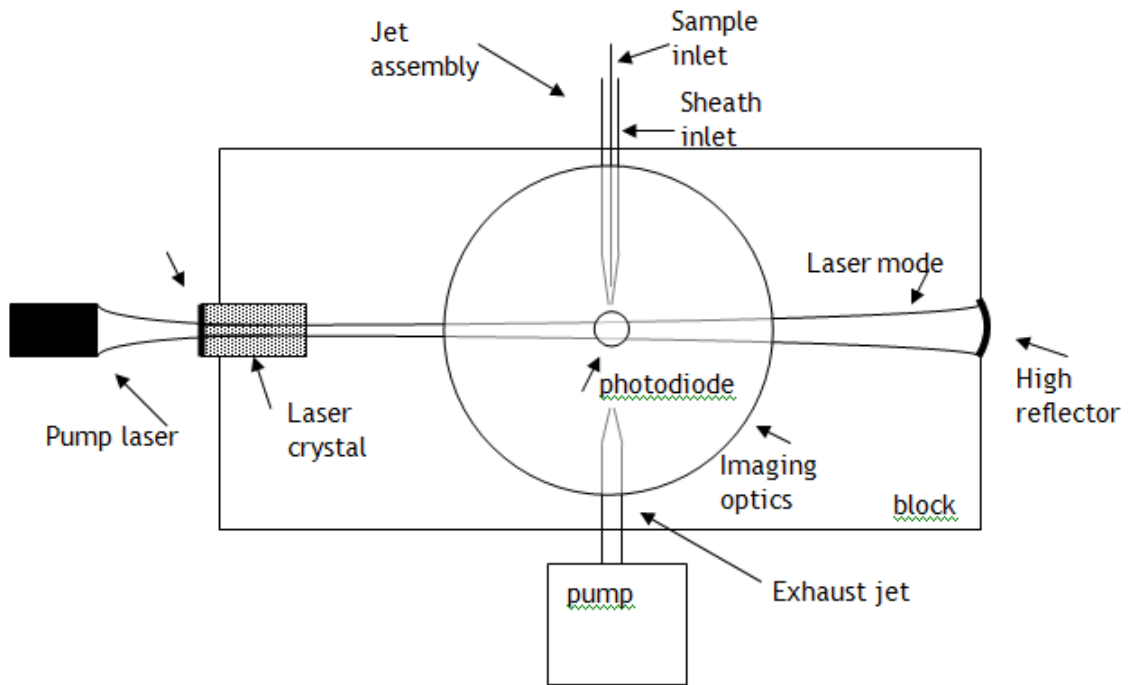


Figure 3: Side View of Optical Block

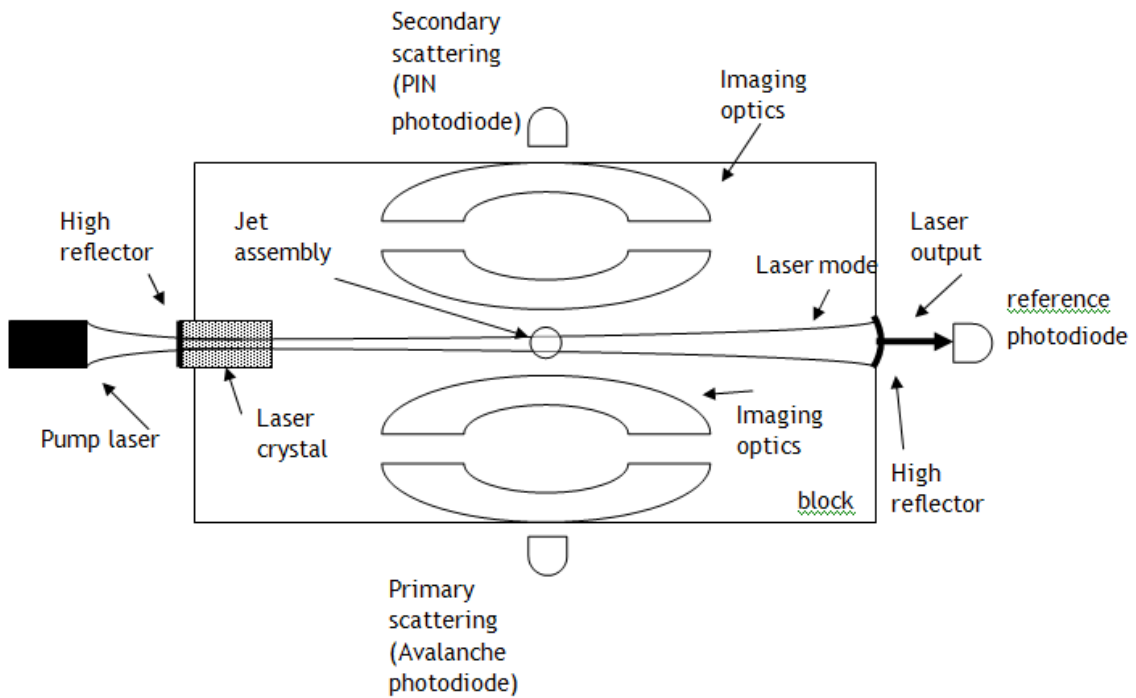


Figure 4: Top View of Optical Block

2.2 Flow System

A pump draws on an exhaust jet, pulling flow through the inlet jet and across the laser mode as illustrated in Figure 5. The inlet jet is an aerodynamically focused assembly with a sample nozzle of 500 μm diameter and a sheath nozzle of 760 μm diameter. The tip of the sheath jet sits within 1 mm of the edge of the laser mode.

Sample flow is between 1 and 100 sccm, typically 50 sccm. The sheath flow is typically 700 sccm. Particle velocity depends on sheath flow rate, but is on the order of 50 to 100 m/sec. Particles are confined to a space that is approximately 10% to 20% of the laser beam diameter, which is 0.5 mm (e^{-2} intensity diameter). This yields a sizing resolution of approximately 2% to 5% of the particle size.

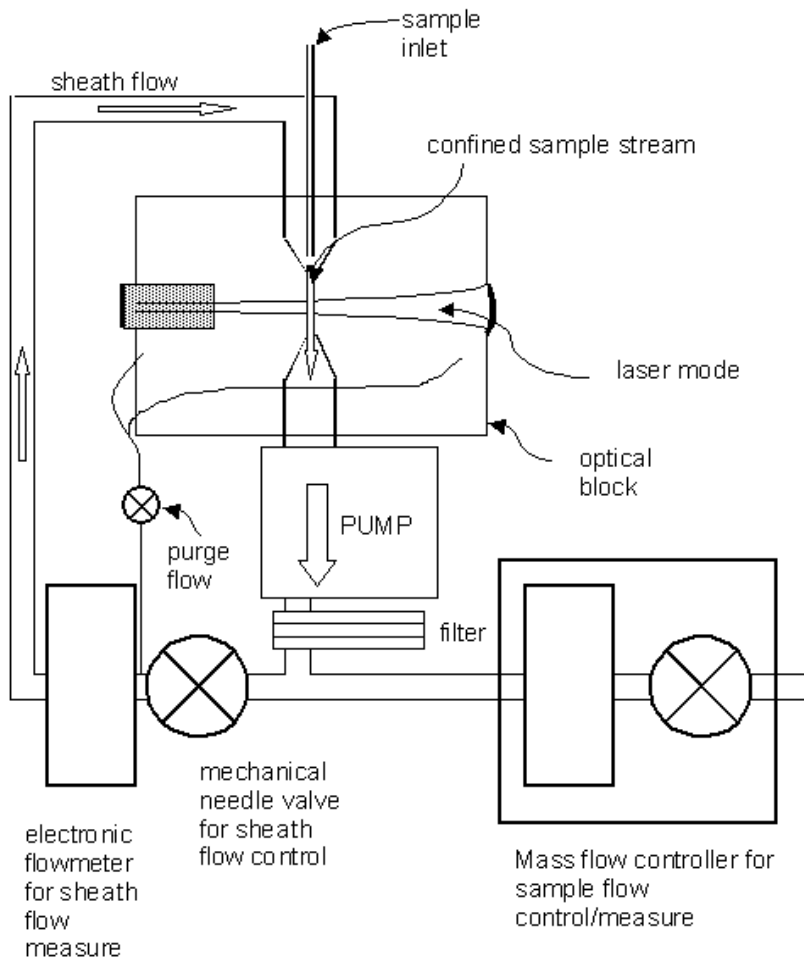


Figure 5: Schematic Diagram of Flow System

2.3 Analog Electronics

2.3.1 Particle Signal Amplification and Tracking

The detector photodiodes produce a photocurrent, which the analog chain then converts to a voltage. The system then processes the resulting signal, which is called the particle signal. The chain is repeated for the primary and secondary detection systems.

After the photodiode transimpedance amplifier magnifies the particle signal, it is mixed with a signal derived from the reference detection system for drift detection.

The particle signal is fed into two different detectors, differing in gain as specified below. In total there are four gain stages: high and low for each of the primary and secondary detection systems.

Gain stage labeling convention

	High gain	Low gain
Primary detector	G3	G2
Secondary detector	G1	G0

Gain ratios:

$$G3/G2 = 50$$

$$G2/G1 = 20$$

$$G1/G0 = 20$$

The gain ratios G3:G2 and G1:G0 are pure electrical amplification gain ratios. The G2:G1 ratio is more complicated, since it involves two independent photodetectors with independent electronics that are on opposite sides of the optical block. See the discussion in 5.2.2.

The gain stages also provide low-pass filtering to the signal. Each gain stage then feeds its own baseline restoration circuit. This restores the 0 Volt baseline, which is disturbed by frequent particle signals after AC coupling. The particle signal is then passed to a peak-hold circuit, which tracks the rise of the signal as a particle crosses the laser and holds the peak value. The digital system then processes the signal and issues a reset.

2.3.2 Laser Power Monitoring

The reference detector is used as a voltage reference and automatic gain control. It is also used for monitoring laser output power, which is directly proportional to the laser

cavity power. As the laser power drifts, the instrument maintains calibration. Only large drifts in power (> 25%) really need to be corrected, since the particle sizing sensitivity is a sixth-root of the laser power.

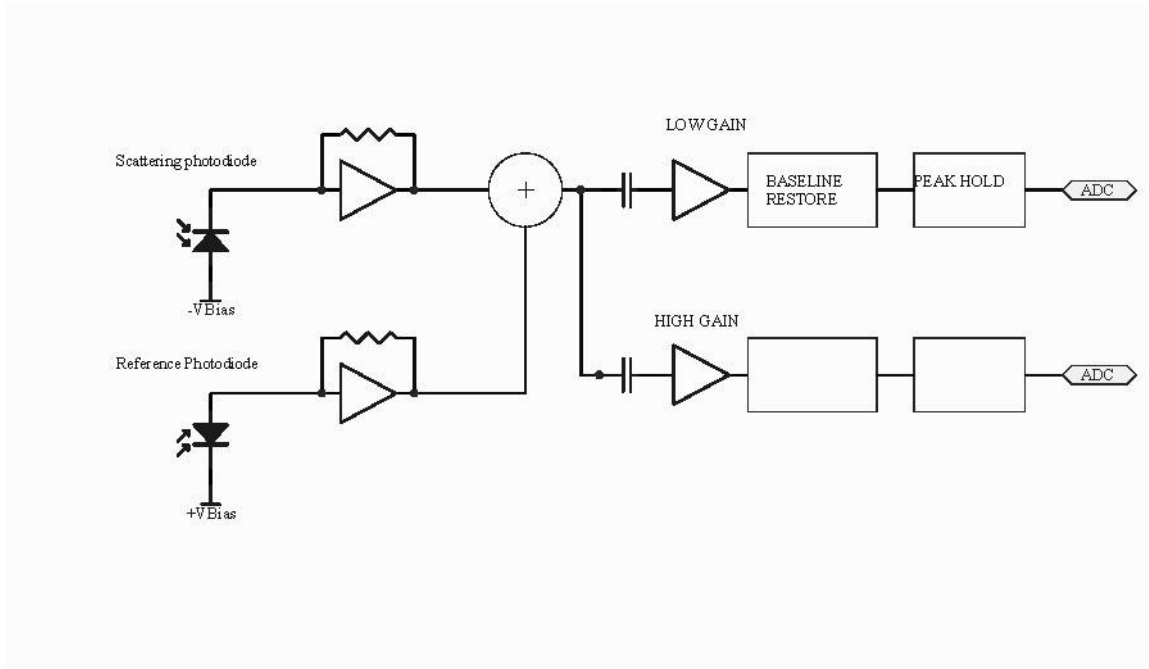


Figure 6: Block Diagram of Analog Electronics

2.4 Digital Electronics System

2.4.1 ADCs and Peak Height Analysis

For each of the four gain stages (2 primary, 2 secondary) there is an associated analog-to-digital converter (ADC). The ADCs run a 16-bit conversion at 500 kHz sample rate. The chain of events is begun as a particle traverses the laser mode and begins scattering light. The particle signal from the highest gain stage on the primary detector (G3) feeds an analog comparator. If the signal exceeds a preset, user-defined threshold, it generates a particle trigger. The threshold value is independent of the particular active bin map; see section 12.0 for a definition of the trigger threshold. Under typical operating conditions, the trigger threshold should be set to register the smallest detectable particle (60 nm diameter).

After a trigger is generated, a small delay occurs to allow the particle signal to reach its maximum. Then the four ADCs sample the four peak-held particle signals from the

four gain stages. The system first examines the highest gain (G3), then the next-highest, and so on. The first ADC that is not in saturation is the valid particle ADC. The value of this ADC is read and compared to a look-up table of bin boundaries previously loaded into memory via the **Map** tab. Depending on where in the look-up table the particle signal belongs, a counter for the appropriate bin is incremented. (Note that there are some conditions which will invalidate a particle event—for example, if the event falls outside certain timing requirements.) After the particle signal is sampled, a reset is sent to the peak-hold circuit and the cycle repeats for the next particle.

The look-up table is the crux of the peak-height analysis in the UHSAS. The user can reset this table at any time to generate a new bin mapping. Using the relative gains and the calibration curve and points, the instrument automatically converts the bin boundaries to a mapping of voltages at each of the gain stages. The mapping process is transparent to the user and occurs every time a bin map is committed to the instrument.

2.4.2 Monitoring and Control

The digital electronics also monitor and control various onboard systems, as follows.

Monitoring and Control:	Monitoring Only:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The mass flow controller, which regulates the sample flow • The pump laser diode—this is regulated through enable/disable lines and through current and temperature set points 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The electronic flow meters for the sheath and purge flows (flows are controlled by mechanically-actuated needle valves) • The laser reference from the reference photodiode (sampled on an ADC) • The molecular scattering level (sampled on an ADC) • Additional housekeeping parameters, such as the electronics box temperature and ambient barometric pressure.¹

Set points for the controlled parameters are stored in configuration files. All monitored parameters are logged with the sample data.

¹ In the future, these readings may be used for correcting flow meters and noise-cancellation circuitry.

2.5 Support PC

The support PC provides a user interface to the instrument. The user interface is a virtual instrument written in LabVIEW. Communication with the digital electronics system is via internal RS232 (115,200 baud, 8N1). The sampling time of the PC I/O is controlled by the user.

Note that the PC is a modest computer intended primarily for running UHSAS software. Installing and running additional programs on the PC, including anti-virus software, may compromise the performance of the system.

3.0 Unpacking and Setting up the UHSAS Airborne

The UHSAS-airborne instrument is delivered in a shipping case that also contains the necessary power cables, accessories and other equipment necessary to make the instrument functional.

To set up the UHSAS, follow the steps below.

- 1.) Remove the instrument from the case. Be careful to handle the instrument using the cylindrical bulkheads only.
- 2.) Locate the ground-test cable (Figure 7) and connect the appropriate end to the canister connector on the rear bulkhead of the instrument. The power end of the ground-test cable can be plugged into the wall power outlet. Input power to the instrument can range from 100-240VAC 50/60Hz.



Figure 7: Ground-Test Cable

- 3.) Connect the external support computer to the serial port connection within the ground test cable. This connection terminates in a 9-pin D-connector.

Note: The instrument will be shipped with 1.5 inches of extra tubing on the inlet line. This tubing makes a “tail” that fits over the sample needle, which is visible when the instrument is outside its canister. See Figure 8.



Figure 8: Extra Tubing on Inlet Line

If the sample tubing needs to be reinstalled, use 1/8" (~3.2 mm) outside diameter (OD) conductive silicon or urethane tubing.

4.0 Using the Instrument

The UHSAS airborne instrument communicates via a serial connection to a computer. The UHSAS software is designed using LabVIEW, a program from National Instruments that provides a user-friendly virtual instrument (commonly called a vi) panel for the control, data display, and data logging of the UHSAS instrument.² The sections below provide an overview of how to use the UHSAS software to start, run, and shut down the instrument. Further details appear in Part Two of this manual.

4.1 Start-Up

- 1.) If you have not already done so, connect the ground-test cable to an appropriate power supply.
- 2.) Apply power. The instrument will start in a default condition and communicate via the serial connection.
- 3.) Boot the support computer.
- 4.) Click on the Spectrometer icon on the desktop to bring up the UHSAS window, shown in Figure 9. Note that the program starts with the **Controls** tab as the default. The **Controls** screen allows the user to set the sample flow and to monitor various parameters.
- 5.) Allow the instrument to run for 30 minutes so the laser and various heaters stabilize.
- 6.) On the **Controls** tab, look to see that the **Reference** voltage is approximately 2.5 V. If the displayed reference is less than 1.88 V, clean the laser optics as described in section 7.0.

² Alternatively, the instrument can be controlled through the serial connection using the protocols in Appendix B.

Check the Flows:

- 7.) Look at the **Sample Flow** displayed on the left of the screen. The instrument is calibrated at the factory with a sample flow of 50 sccm, so it is a good idea to set the Sample Flow to this value during the following performance check. Adjust the flow if necessary, either by using the “slider” control or by manually entering a number in the set voltage box at the bottom of the flow indicator.
- 8.) Look to see that the Sheath flow is about 700 sccm.

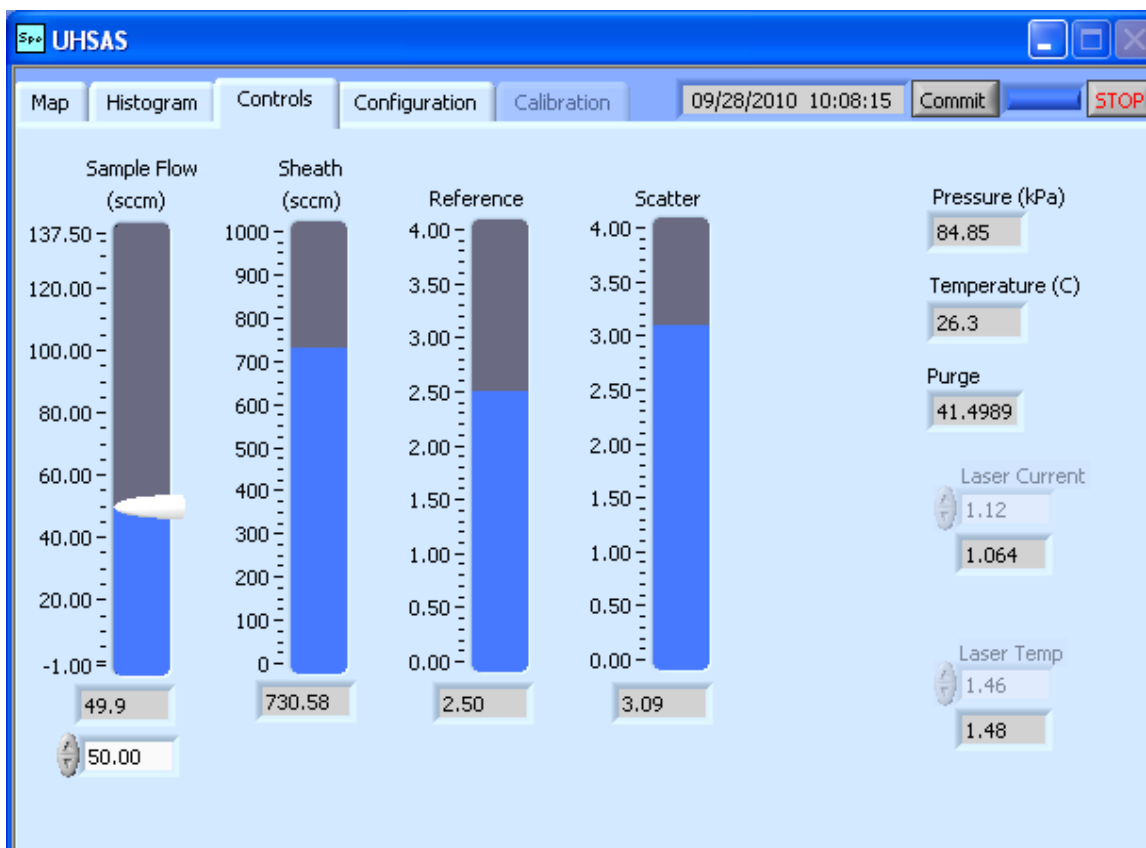


Figure 9: The **Controls** Tab on the UHSAS Software

Perform a Zero-Count, if desired:

- 9.) Detach the ground-test cable and remove the instrument from the canister. Attach the bench-test table, as shown in Figure 10. *Make sure not to touch the exposed metal on the cable connector if power is on.*



Figure 10: Attaching the Bench-Test Cable

- 10.) Detach the inlet tubing at the joint and install the zero-count filter, as shown in Figure 11.

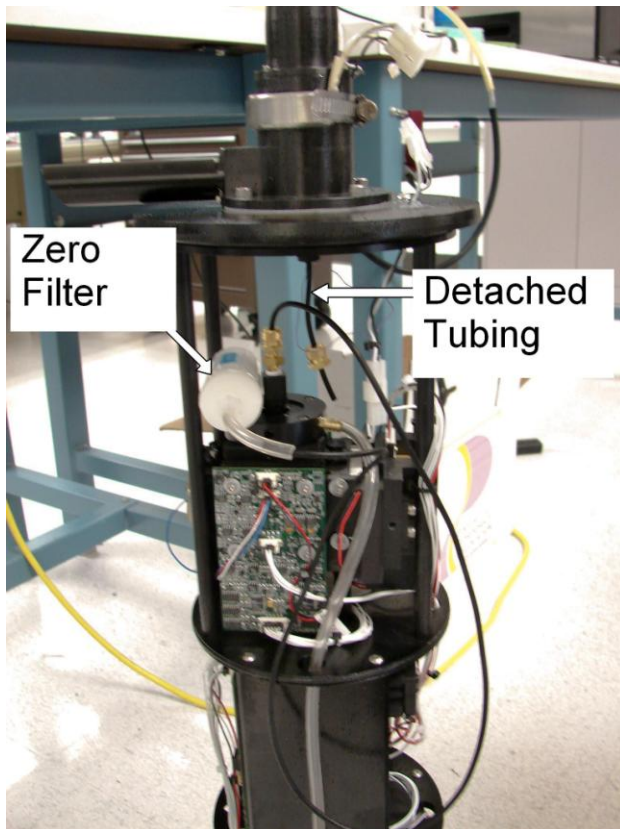


Figure 11: UHSAS Airborne with Zero-Filter in Place

- 11.) Select the **Histogram** tab to display counts versus bin number.
- 12.) Click on the **Run** button near the upper left corner of this window to show the particle accumulations. There should be very few counts.
- 13.) Remove the zero filter for room air sampling. Many counts should appear. Reattach the tubing so the instrument is sampling air from the inlet. Unplug and remove the bench-test cable, reinsert the instrument in its canister, and reinsert the ground-test cable.

Check Instrument Performance:

- 14.) Introduce a collection of 100-nm particles into the inlet. The NIST SRM 1963 100 nm work well. These are standard reference particles used during factory calibration.
- 15.) The histogram should show a tight distribution with a peak near 100 nm (Figure 12). There should be relatively few particles in bins below and above the peak. The instrument may need calibration if the peak is poorly resolved with a broad distribution of particles (Figure 13). Calibration may also be required if the peak is significantly higher or lower than 100 nm. Calibration may also be required if the peak is significantly higher or lower than 100 nm. *Note:* Figure 12 through Figure 15 are from an older version of the software; however, for the situations described, the histogram shapes will appear similarly in the new software.

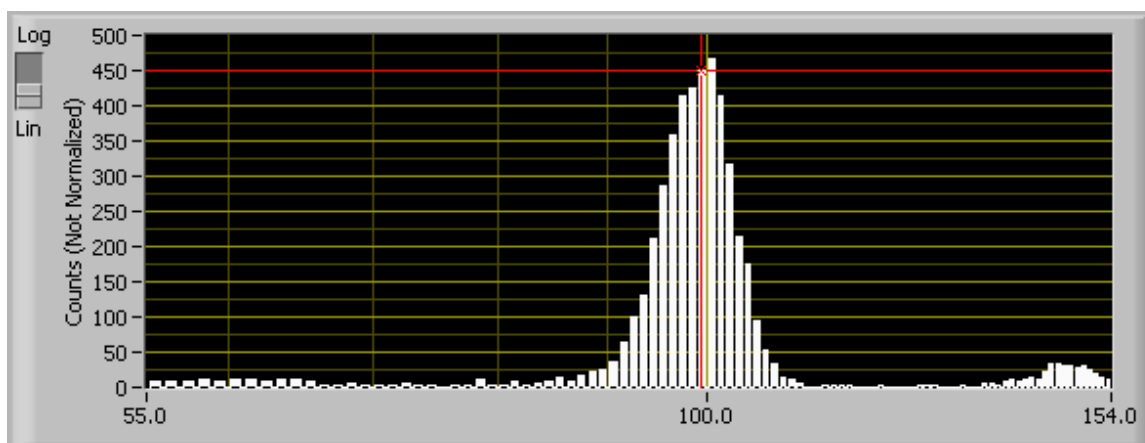


Figure 12: 100-nm Particle Distribution on a Properly Calibrated Instrument

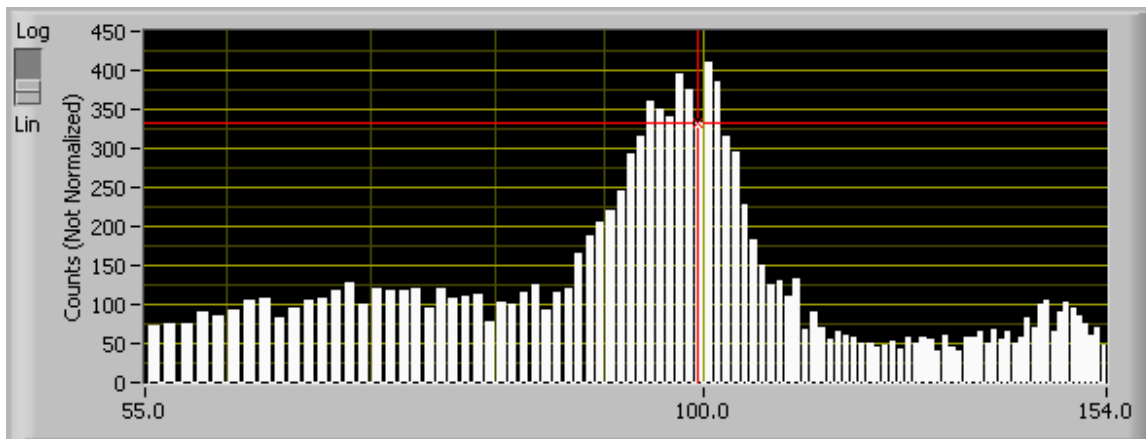


Figure 13: 100-nm Particle Distribution on an Instrument that Needs Calibration

- 16.) Sample the ambient air. The histogram distribution should show a smooth transition of particle counts from small to large bins (Figure 14.) Small “bumps” in the distribution are normal. If you see an uneven distribution of particles around 110 nm and/or 215 nm (Figure 15), this is usually an indication that calibration is needed. The anomalies are near the calibration curve’s gain-overlap regions, which need to be “stitched” together more accurately.

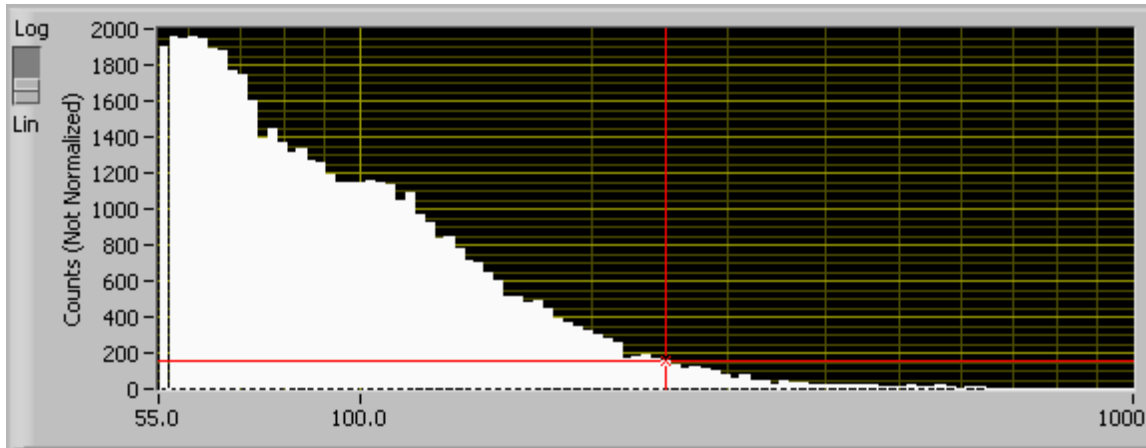


Figure 14: Ambient-Air Distribution on a Properly Calibrated Instrument

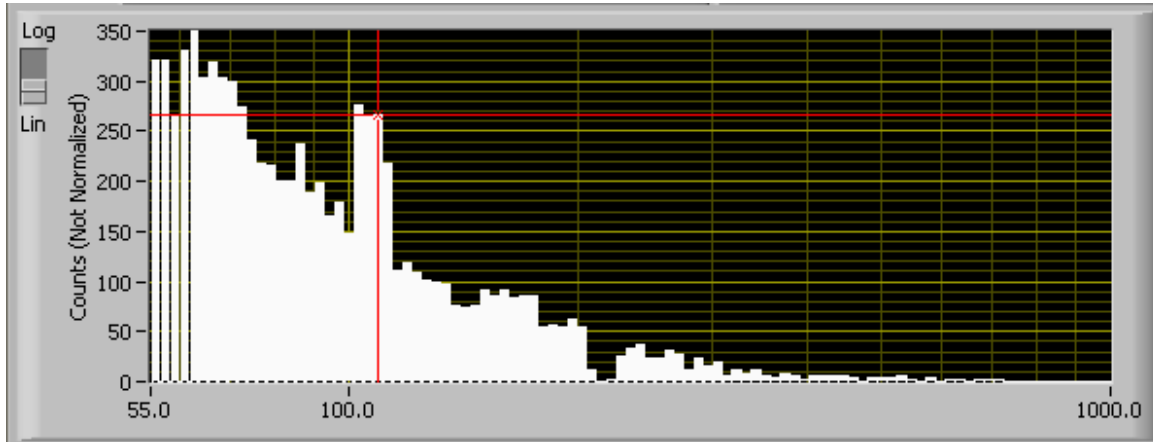


Figure 15: Ambient-Air Distribution on an Instrument that Needs Calibration

The instrument is now ready to use. Record the data if desired, using the **Record** button. You can also set the size range displayed on the histogram using the **Map** tab.

4.2 Shutdown / Power Off Procedure

- If file recording is activated, go to Histogram tab and press the **Record** button to stop the recording. The **Record** button will change color from a darker grey to the same color grey as the background.
- Press the rectangular **STOP** button located in the upper right of the UHSAS screen. This stops the execution of the UHSAS program. (Note that you cannot quit by clicking the upper right of the window.) Clicking **STOP** ensures proper instrument shutdown and safety.
- Shut down the support computer using normal Windows controls.
- Turn off the instrument by disconnecting the ground-test cable from the power supply.

5.0 Calibration

5.1 Calibration Overview

Calibration is an important process for any particle spectrometer. The UHSAS, with its high resolution and large number of arbitrarily settable bins, poses unique challenges in this area. Several features have been added to this instrument to make the calibration process as easy and accurate as possible.

There are four separate gain stages which must be “stitched” together for accurate, seamless sizing across the full dynamic range of the instrument. These gain stages are labeled in a table in section 2.3.1. There are two types of gains that need calibrating: absolute and relative gains. Relative gains are used to calibrate gain stages to one another. Absolute gain is used to fix the overall scale to a known particle size.

5.1.1 Relative Gain Calibration

The relative gain calibration is mostly automated, though the results can always be altered if the user needs to make slight adjustments. The relative gain calibration works by sampling an ambient air distribution that contains particles of all sizes measured by the UHSAS. The instrument detects a particle on adjacent gain stages, for example G3 and G2, noting the signal size on both gain stages in volts. For example, a 100 nm particle might be 3 V on G3 and 0.060 V on G2. By noting many such events, a relationship between the signal size of a particle on the two gain stages can be determined. Specifically, a linear fit to the data for many events produces a relative gain and an offset between adjacent gain stages. By running this procedure on all adjacent gain stage pairs (G3 and G2; G2 and G1; G1 and G0) a complete specification of the relative gains can be developed. This links the optical and electronic signals across the range of the instrument, which spans 6 decades of signal size in volts. For details on how to use the UHSAS software to set relative gains, see section 5.2.2.

5.1.2 Absolute Calibration

In addition to the relative gains, there is an absolute calibration curve, which correlates the particle signal size in volts to the particle size in nm. Once the relative gains are known, the corrected response for the entire instrument can be formed. Since the wavelength of the instrument is 1054 nm, it is expected that all particles below approximately 300 nm will lie on a sixth-power curve—that is, the particle signal is a sixth-power of the particle size. This has been hard-coded into the instrument by

forcing the signals from G3, G2 and G1 to fall on a sixth-power curve. The final gain stage, G0, used for particles from 300 to 1000 nm, has a Mie curve appropriate for the scattering response of the instrument (see Figure 16). It is a complicated function which is calculated and confirmed by test particle measurements. In the event that the user has a preferred curve, empirical or theoretical, this curve can be entered instead.

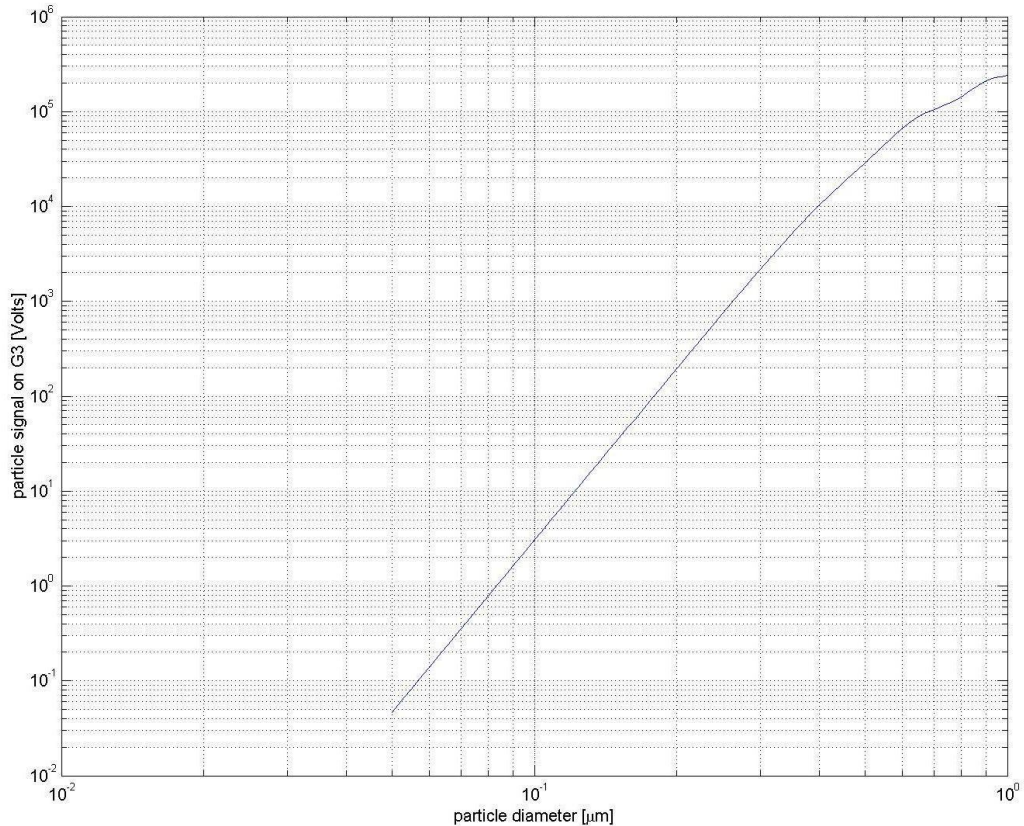


Figure 16: Example Calibration Curve

In principle, if all the relative gains are known accurately, and the calibration curve is known, the instrument need only be calibrated in an absolute sense at one point—at any point, in fact. In practice it is best to use a few trusted particles. For factory calibration, the NIST SRM 1963 100 nm standard reference material is used to fix the calibration at one point. Along with the relative gains and calibration curve, the instrument is then calibrated over its range. Other points in the instrument's range are checked for accuracy with reference particles such as the NIST SRM 1691 269 nm.

In some cases, the user may have preferred particles to use for calibration. In this case as many particles as needed may be used. If the particles do not all fall on the pre-set

instrument calibration curve, the calibration curve is altered slightly to ensure that the particles return results that are the stated particle sizes. The information representing signal size for a given particle size is entered in the software and is referred to as a calibration reference point.

Whenever changes are made to the relative gain parameters, the calibration curve, or the calibration reference points, the new parameters are used when the next bin map is generated and committed to the instrument.

5.2 Calibration Procedure

All calibration is performed from the **Calibration** tab on the UHSAS screen. To access this tab, the instrument needs to be in Calibration mode. Users must enter a password on the **Configuration** tab to put the instrument in this mode.

5.2.1 Reasons for Calibration

The calibration curve is shown on the **Calibration Curve** sub-tab. This curve may need to be altered from the pre-set values in order to accommodate several possible inconsistencies:

- Particles that have been inconsistently sized with other methods
- Nonlinearities in the instrument's detection electronics
- Improved empirical data on the non-power-law portion of the curve

It may also be necessary to recalibrate the size scale of the UHSAS. Some reasons for this include:

- The laser power has dropped and cannot be fully restored
- Internal relative calibration has degraded
- Other types of particles (not PSL) with a different index of refraction are being used
- The calibration must agree with previously used standard materials

The following sections outline the calibration process. A description of additional features on the **Calibration** tab is presented in section 13.0.

5.2.2 Step One: Relative Gain Calibration

- 1.) If you haven't already done so, commit a size histogram using the **Commit** button.

- 2.) Ensure the **Reference** value is 2.25 - 2.75 V (see the **Controls** tab).
- 3.) On the **Calibration** tab, choose the relative gain tab labeled **G3:G2 Gain** and press **Clear**.
- 4.) Open the sample inlet to ambient air in a normal lab environment (not a cleanroom environment). If this is difficult, arrange some other way for the sample inlet to access a broad distribution of particles from 0.1 μm to 1.0 μm diameter.
- 5.) Press **Run**. As particles are sampled, they appear on the relative gain plot. (See Figure 17.) Those particles which can be measured on both G3 and G2 will be used to measure the relative gain and offset between these stages. When a minimum number of data points has been reached, the gain parameters begin to appear in the boxes in the top left of the screen. The minimum number of points for a relative gain calibration is hard-coded in the software and varies depending on the gain stages being calibrated. This number is displayed in the **Pts** field. When this number is reached, new points are no longer added to those being displayed and being used to calculate the calibration. The relative gain calibration can also be stopped manually by pressing the **Run** button again. *Note: while relative gains are being calibrated, the switch in the bottom left of the screen should be set to "Allow Non-Zero Offset."*

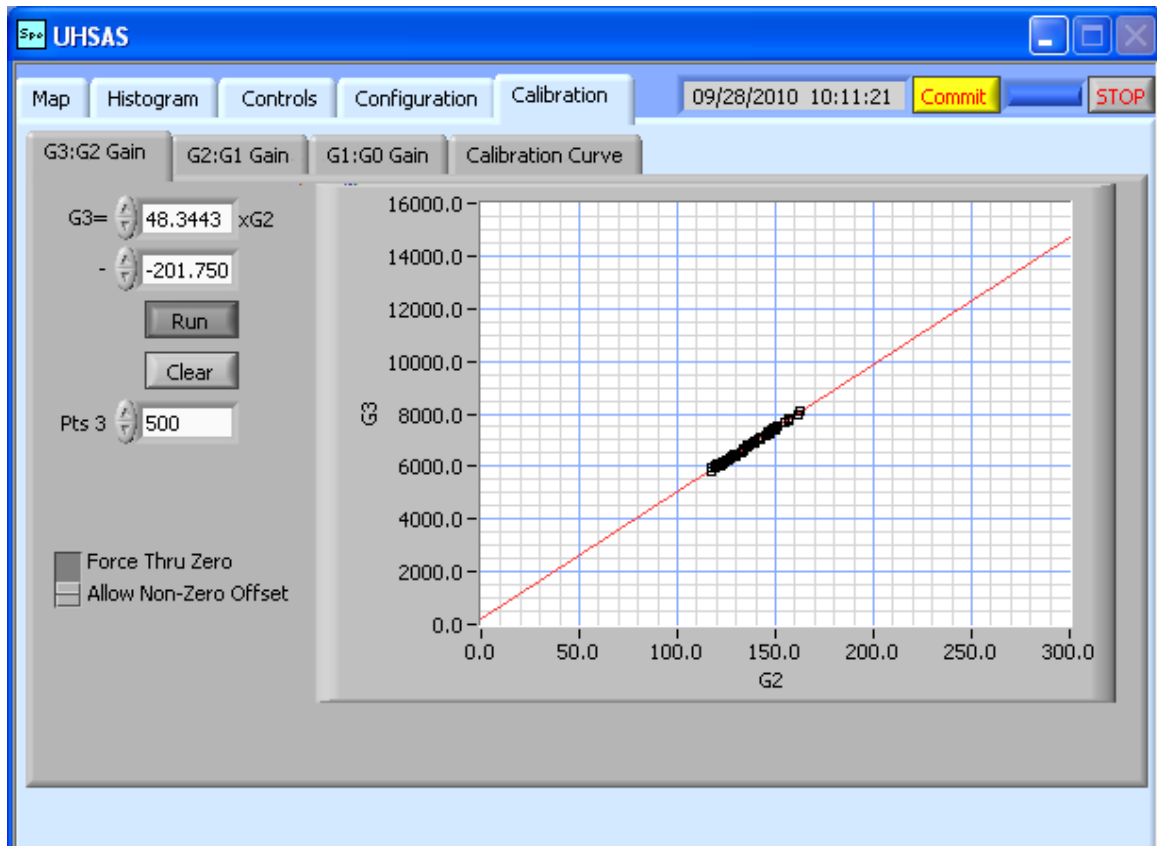


Figure 17: Running a Relative Gain Calibration

- 6.) The process stops when the pre-set number of points has been acquired. The graph should show the data points scattered around a best-fit line.
- 7.) Repeat this procedure for the other relative gain tabs, which are labeled **G2:G1 Gain** and **G1:G0 Gain**. Acquiring a sufficient number of large particles (for G1:G0) may take up to ten minutes, especially at flow rates below 60 sccm. **Note:** The program will automatically use the new gain and offset parameters as long as the current session is running; however, if these parameters should be used permanently, they must be saved in the configuration file. To do this, click on the **Save** button on the **Configuration** tab.

Several comments on the relative gains are needed. In the particle-size regions where detection passes from one gain stage to another, there can be discontinuities in the histograms produced. The histograms are very sensitive to the relative gain parameters, which are experimental quantities subject to statistical and systematic error. The stitching region between G2 and G1 is particularly prominent in this regard, since the detection technique changes between these gain stages—they are physically different photo-detectors. The ability to study these transition regions with high resolution can overemphasize the stitching errors. In most cases, the semi-auto-calibration provided should be adequate.

Stitching errors between the gain stages will also be more noticeable for certain choices of bin map. This is especially the case if, near the stitch region, the bin width is less than 1% of the bin center. For instance, say a bin in a stitch region collects 299-301 nm particles. In this case, the bin width (2 nm) is less than 1% of its center (1% of 300 nm, or 3 nm), so stitching errors may occur.

5.2.3 Step Two: Absolute Calibration

- 1.) Gather a collection of particles to be used as reference particles. Recommended sizes are 100 nm, 269 nm, 500 nm, and 930 nm. Using all four of these sizes will test all the instrument's gain stages. The instrument can also be tested with just 100 nm particles or with 100 nm and 930 nm particles, but the results will not give as clear a picture of the calibration.
- 2.) Click on the **Calibration curve** tab. The current calibration curve should be shown.
- 3.) Clear all data from the calibration points array (see Figure 18) EXCEPT for the 100-nm point on gain stage. To clear a data point, right-click in the cluster box that contains the three point values (Gain, mV, nm) and select **Delete Element**. **Note:** The points array displays one point's information at a time.

To see a new point, click on the arrows above the **Points** label. The **Points** field shows the element in the points array that is currently displayed.

- 4.) With your collection of particles, note in which gain stage each particle will be measured by looking at the size of the particle and the calibration curve. The red dots on the calibration curve indicate the saturation levels of each gain stage—i.e., the largest particles measurable on each stage. For example, the region below the first red dot is covered by G3, the region between the first and second red dots is covered by G2, etc. See Figure 18.

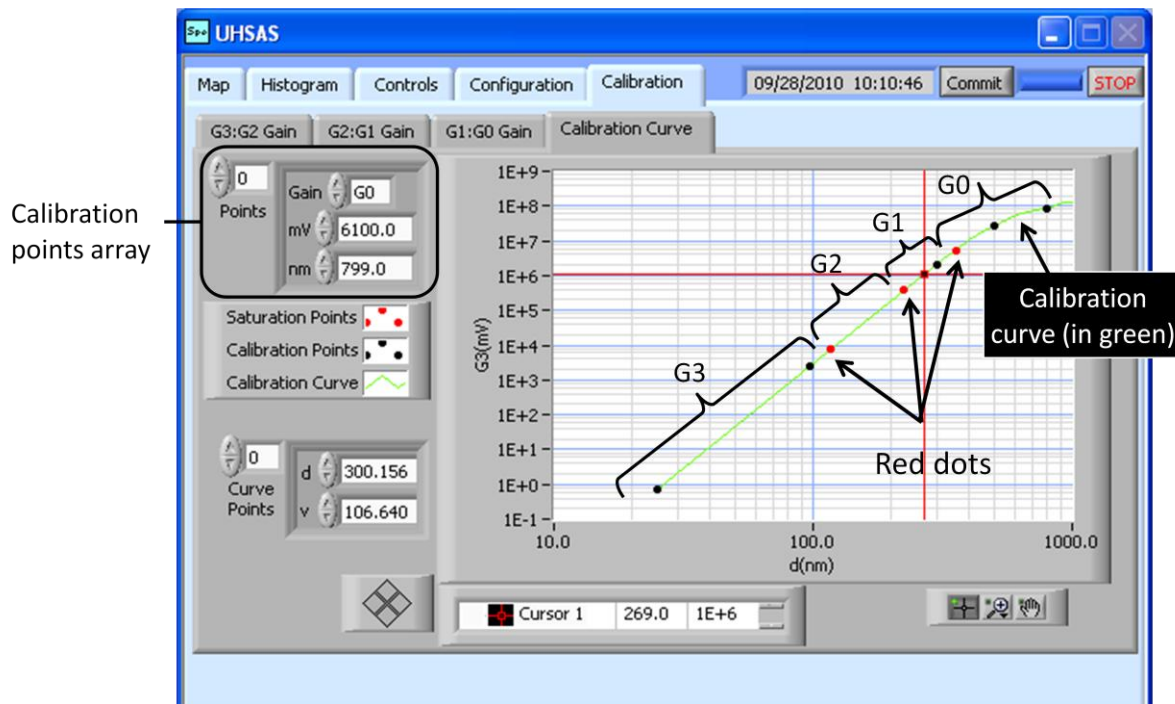


Figure 18: Calibrating the UHSAS

- 5.) Choose a particle size and begin introducing particles to the sample inlet of the UHSAS.
- 6.) Go to the **Map** tab and set up a voltage bin map:
 - a.) Press **Volts**.
 - b.) Choose a gain stage (G3, G2, G1 or G0) appropriate to the particle size.
 - c.) Set the range as 100 to 10000 mV.
 - d.) Press **Linear**.
 - e.) Press **Commit**.
- 7.) Go to the histogram page and note the peak of the voltage histogram.
- 8.) Return to the **Calibration** tab and the **Calibration Curve** sub-tab.

- 9.) Enter the point into a new data point in the calibration points array. The calibration curve in the graph should show a new white point, and the calibration curve should adjust to accommodate the new point.
- 10.) If the curve looks completely wrong, check that the correct gain stage and data were entered. If needed, remove the 100 nm calibration point.
- 11.) Repeat for as many particles as needed.

Changes to the calibration curve will take effect on the next bin map commit. For more detailed information on the calibration tab, see section 13.0.

5.3 Calibration Confirmation

5.3.1 Particle Size Calibration Confirmation

In order to confirm calibration of the UHSAS instrument, the following steps should be taken.

- 1) Confirm that the laser reference level is near 2.5 V. If it is not, cleaning may be needed; see section 7.0.
- 2) Run a monodisperse sample of PSL particles to the instrument sample inlet. These should be PSL standard reference materials from NIST—the NIST 100 nm SRM or the NIST 269 nm SRM. Other manufacturers' particles may not agree with the sizes reported by NIST, and therefore cannot be used to confirm the factory calibration with a high degree of accuracy.
- 3) Configure a size bin map around the particle size used. A good choice is a bin map with 99 bins, a start value of 0.5 times the nominal size, and a stop value of 1.5 times the nominal size.
- 4) Start a histogram.
- 5) Accumulate a sufficient number of counts and confirm that the peak position is in agreement with the known particle size. If it is not, recalibration may be needed.

5.3.2 Flow Rate Calibration Confirmation

UHSAS users should periodically confirm that the sample flow is properly calibrated. To do this, follow the steps below.

- 1) Set the sheath flow (700 ccm at sea-level) with the manual valve.
- 2) Place a calibrated flow meter in line with the sample inlet.
- 3) Compare the results of the flow meter reading to the sample flow monitor on the **Controls** tab. The readings should be very similar

If the flow meter and **Controls** tab reading differ considerably, the instrument may have a leak. Check to ensure that all tubing is undamaged and tightly connected.

Note: On the **Configuration** tab, the sample flow and sample set parameters are used to convert mass flow signals into flow rates. The parameters are fits to 3rd order polynomials used to describe the response of the flow controller. The parameters can be changed to accommodate other gases. Consult DMT for instructions or revised calibration parameters.

6.0 Safety Procedures and Troubleshooting

6.1 Safety Procedures

CAUTION: All laser safety precautions noted on caution labels should be adhered to.

6.2 Troubleshooting

DMT advises users periodically to perform a zero count test and check the instrument Reference level displayed on the **Controls** tab. These tests and checks should be performed at least once a week to confirm the instrument is functioning properly.

To perform a zero count:

- Install the supplied zero-count filter to the inlet of unit. (See Figure 11.)
- Load a bin map of 55 to 154 nm, as this will help determine if the unit has a leak or it is counting noise.
- Run 5-minute samples. If you get more than a few counts, determine whether these counts reflect noise or a leak. Noise will typically appear in only the first few bins. If the unit has a leak, in contrast, typically there will be an ambient distribution.
- If the unit appears to have noise counts, check the **Reference** level on the **Controls** tab. The displayed Reference should be approximately 2.5 V; if it has dropped by more than 25% (i.e., Reference < 1.88 V), clean the laser optics as described in section 7.0.
- If the unit appears to have a leak, check any external connections between the unit and the filter. Then rerun the zero-count test.

- If an acceptable background zero-count level cannot be attained, do a recirculation check. On the **Configuration** tab, log on with a password to put the system in calibration mode. On the **Map** tab, select time binning, click on the **G3** button, and commit a map with a range from 10 - 300. The resulting histogram should show mostly particles with transit times of less than 100 msec. If there are many particles with longer transit times, check for leaks in the unit. If necessary, contact a service representative for further assistance.

To check the Laser Reference Voltages:

- Ensure the **Laser Current** is on and **Laser Temperature** is at the correct value.
- Check the **Reference** level on the **Controls** tab. If the displayed Reference is less than 1.88 V, clean the laser optics as described in section 7.0.
- If cleaning does not resolve the problem, contact a DMT service representative for further assistance.

7.0 Cleaning the Laser Optics

Under normal operating conditions, the laser optics should not need to be cleaned very often. However, if the unit is often moved or turned on and off, the optics may need more frequent cleaning. A good indication of whether the laser optics require cleaning is the **Reference** voltage, which is displayed on the **Controls** tab. The initial value for the Reference voltage is typically 2.5 V; the factory value for your particular probe can be found on the last page of the data sheet supplied with the instrument. If this voltage drops by 25% or more, the laser optics will need to be cleaned.

WARNING: The UHSAS-A uses a high power invisible infrared laser. The optics should only be cleaned by personal familiar with laser safety precautions. Failure to follow safe practices can lead to eye damage or permanent blindness. *In no cases should the laser be operated with a cleaning port removed.*



To clean the optics, follow the steps below:

- 1.) In the UHSAS software program, enter a password on the **Configuration** tab to put the instrument in calibration mode. Then, on the **Controls** tab, click on the **Laser ON/OFF** button to turn off the laser.
- 2.) Remove the instrument from its canister and set it on a vertical stand. Plug in the bench-test cable, as shown in Figure 10. *Make sure not to touch the exposed metal on the cable connector if power is on, or you may get shocked.*
- 3.) For best access to the optics, remove the top part of the instrument. Do so by unplugging the heater connector (Figure 19-left) and then unscrewing the four screws securing the top and mid-sections of the instrument (Figure 19-right). Then lift the top of the instrument straight up.

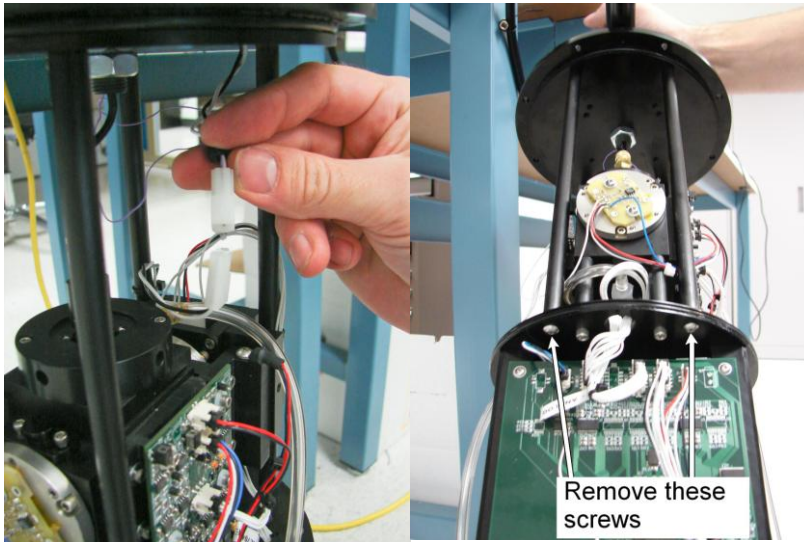


Figure 19: Preparing to Remove the Top of the Probe

- 4.) Open the tubing at the joint in the exhaust line (see Figure 20). Opening the line creates positive pressure in the block and helps keep out contamination.

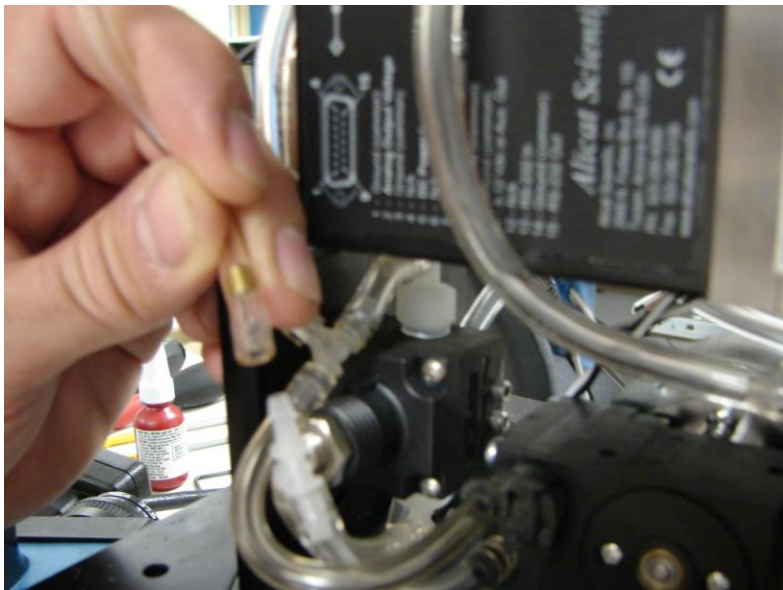


Figure 20: Opening the Exhaust Line

- 5.) Using a 3/32" Allen wrench, loosen the thumbscrews on the cleaning port for the mirror optics (Figure 21). Remove the port, ensuring the o-ring stays with the port.

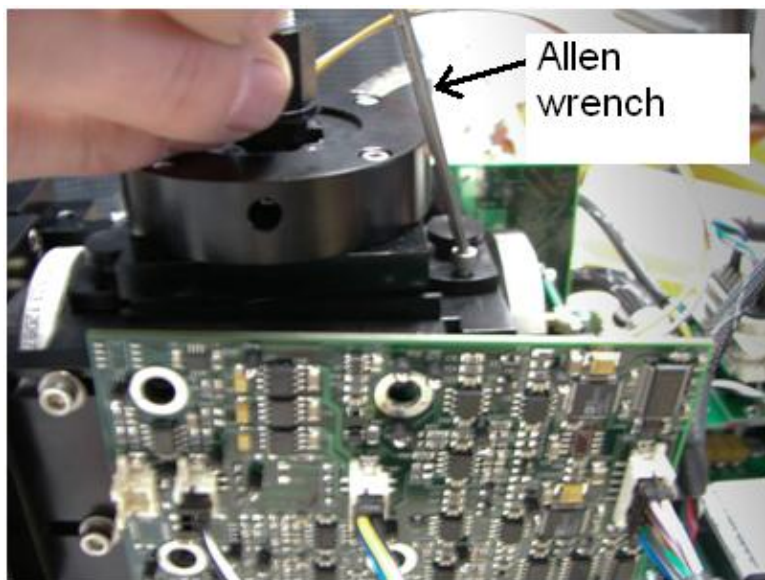


Figure 21: Loosening Screws on Cleaning Port

- 6.) Using a Q-tip and spectra-photo grade acetone, clean the optic. Figure 22-left shows the Q-tip inserted in the cleaning port, while Figure 22-right shows the desired motion on a stand-alone mirror mount. A gentle swipe in one direction across the middle portion of the optic seems to work the best. DO NOT use a scrubbing or circular motion, as this tends to spread around any contamination

and hampers the cleaning effort. Usually 2-3 cleaning swipes using fresh acetone and fresh Q-tips for each swipe is adequate. **Note:** Avoid hitting the side of the cleaning port with the Q-tip, as grease from the o-ring can get on the Q-tip and smear the optics.

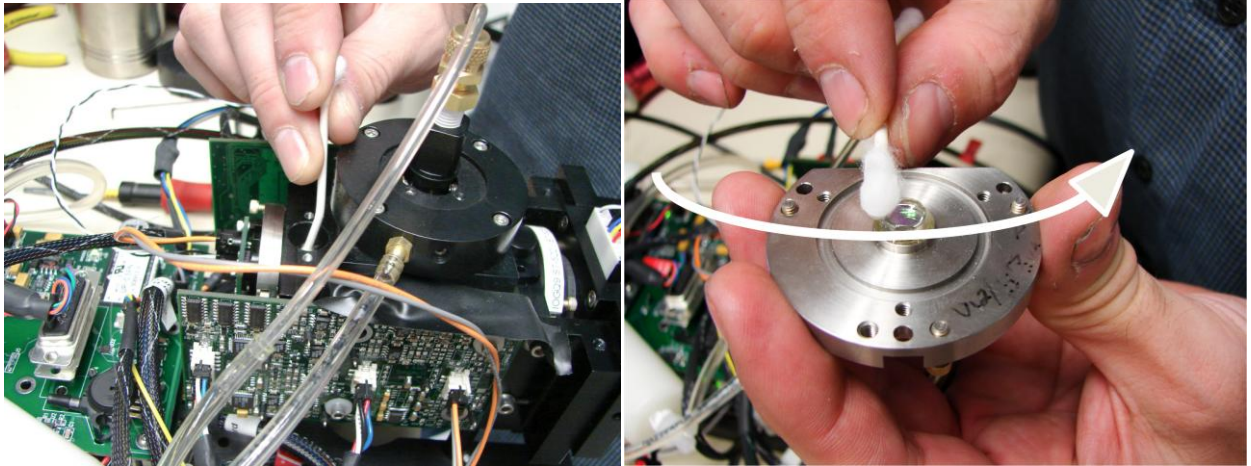


Figure 22: Cleaning the Optic

- 7.) Replace the cleaning port and tighten the thumbscrews, ensuring the o-ring is installed. Turn on instrument power, and turn on the laser using the **Laser ON/OFF** button on the **Controls** tab.
- 8.) Observe the laser power for one minute by examining if **Reference** has returned approximately to 2.5 V. If laser reference power is still low, repeat the cleaning procedure outlined in steps 5-7 for the optic at the back end of the optical block. This is the crystal/laser end. *Use caution*, as the crystal end is delicate and scratches easily. Only clean the crystal end when necessary and with the laser OFF.
- 9.) Turn on the laser current. Let instrument run for 15 minutes to stabilize.
- 10.) Check the Reference level of the unit. If it is within 15% of 2.5 V, the cleaning was successful. If it is lower than when the cleaning started, the cleaning was unsuccessful.
- 11.) Repeat above steps until an adequate Reference level has been attained.
- 12.) Close the tubing on the optical block exhaust line. Reinstall top of probe on the main body, and reinstall the entire instrument in canister.

In the unlikely event the laser power cannot be cleaned up to an adequate level, consult the service representative for further assistance.

If the instrument becomes contaminated, it should be returned to the manufacturer for decontamination, cleaning and service.

8.0 Communications

The data stream that the UHSAS sends to the laptop is sent at 115,200 baud, 8N1. A serial stream for data transmission to an external data system is also available through the laptop. This data stream is ascii text at 115,200 baud, 8N1, tab-delimited. **NOTE:** The serial-stream data are transmitted at the same repetition rate as the **Sample Time** specified on the **Histogram** tab; if this sample time is set to five minutes, the serial packet will only be sent out once every five minutes. The header of the serial stream is a channel list in the same format as the first 2 lines of the UHSAS data file, and it is sent before any data are transmitted. The serial port connector is a standard 9-pin D-connector and can be connected to the serial port of an external computer with a standard female/male straight serial cable. The serial port is determined by the Broadcast Port COM parameter on the Configuration tab. If this port is set to 0, no data are broadcast.

See your IT support department for assistance with connecting the UHSAS to the local network or internet.

Part II: Software

The UHSAS program is designed in LabVIEW, a software program that provides a user-friendly virtual instrument panel for the control, data display, and data logging of the UHSAS instrument. This manual describes version 4.1.0 of the software.

When the UHSAS program is started, five tabs appear at the top of the screen. Clicking on these tabs will bring up different displays, as follows:

1. **Controls Tab** - Monitors and/or controls variables such as sample flow, sheath flow, reference and scatter values, ambient pressure and temperature, and laser current and temperature. The Controls tab is the default screen that appears upon program start-up.
2. **Map Tab**—Allows the user to commit the desired bin map to the instrument. The bin map determines how the UHSAS categorizes and sizes particles.

3. **Histogram Tab**—Displays a histogram of particles and allows the user to set desired histogram parameters. These parameters include whether the histogram displays data linearly or logarithmically, whether the x-axis charts bin number or particle size, and whether the y-axis displays particle count or concentration. This tab also allows users to set the sample time.
4. **Configuration Tab**—Allows the user to view and set system parameters. This tab also allows users to enter a system password which expands access to features and parameters on the Configuration tab and other tabs.
5. **Calibration Tab**—Assists the user in recalibrating the UHSAS.

The sections below provide details about the different screens available by clicking on the tabs.

9.0 Map Tab

The size range displayed on the histogram is controlled through the **Map** tab. The **Map** tab shows the boundaries of the bin width map that is used for the display. The map can be modified in multiple ways depending on user preference.

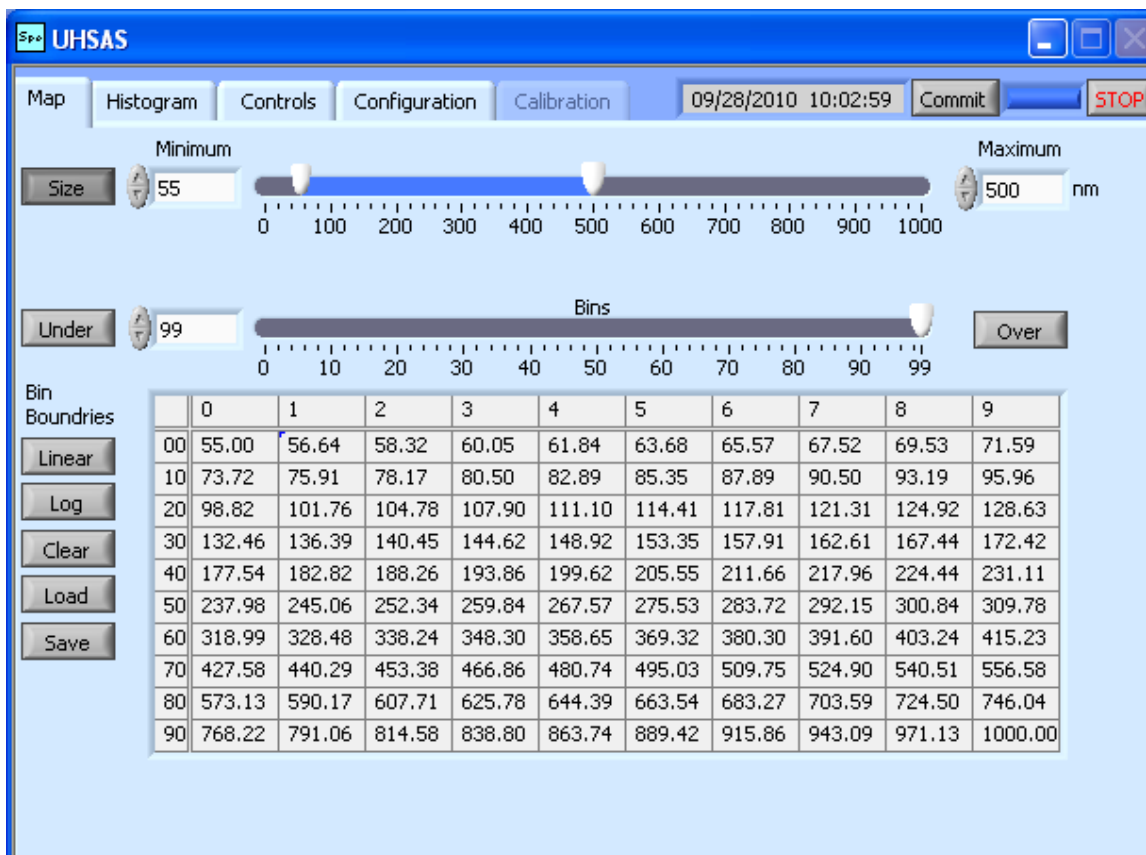


Figure 23: Map Tab

This tab sets and commits a bin map, which determines the x-axis of the histogram graph. The bin map spreadsheet values are the values that are committed to the instrument.

To set a bin map, follow the steps below.

1. Choose size, volts, or time as the binning criteria using the buttons in the upper left of the screen. Note that you must enter a password on the **Configuration** tab to enable the **Volts** and **Time** buttons; see Figure 24.
 - **Size**: creates a histogram of particle diameters, specified in nm.
 - **Volts**: creates a histogram in voltage space (mV) of the gain stage chosen (G3, G2 G1 or G0).
 - **Time**: creates a histogram of transit times (μ s) of the gain stage chosen.

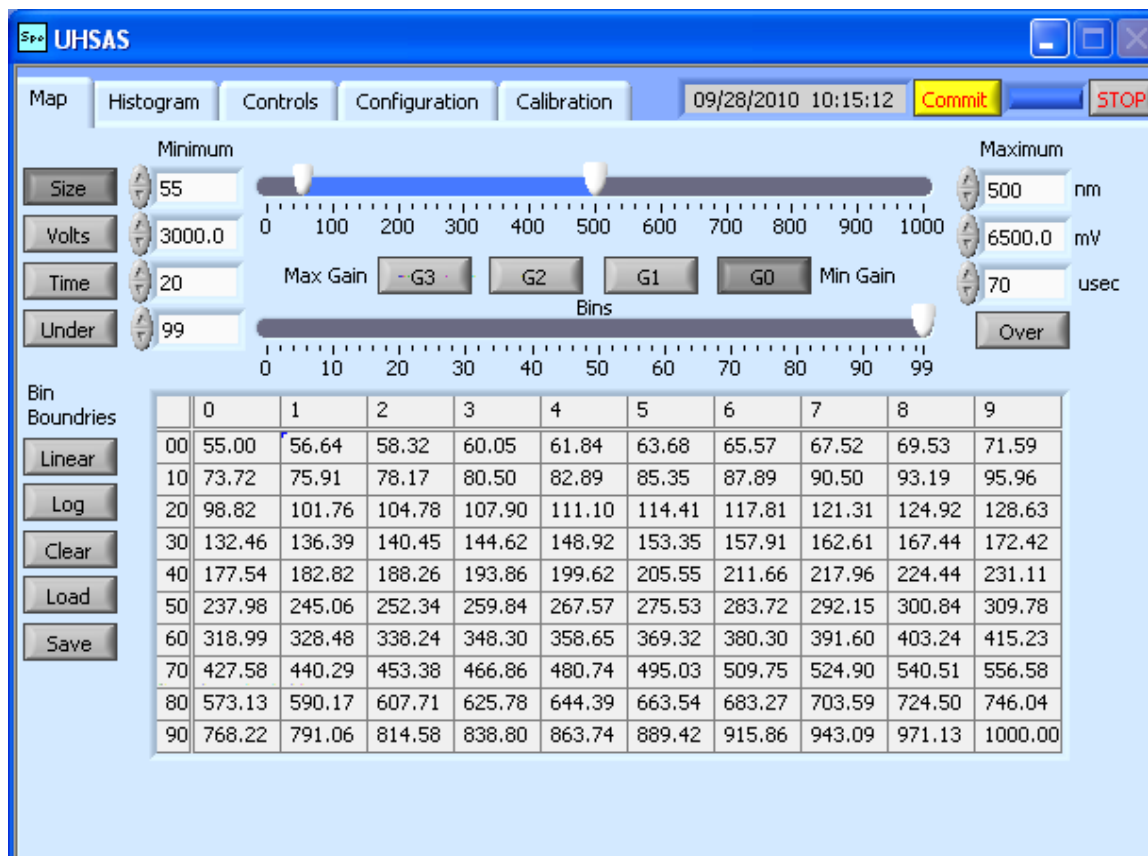


Figure 24: Map Tab with Password-Protected Options

2. Specify the range minimum and maximum values, if new ones are desired. This can be done in several ways:
 - Typing a value directly into the **Minimum** and **Maximum** fields.

- Using the up and down arrows to change the values in the **Minimum** and **Maximum** fields.
 - Using the slider controls to change the minimum and maximum values. The blue portion of the slider bar shows the range that the UHSAS will map.
3. Choose the number of bins. This can be done either by using the **Bins** slider control or by typing in a number in the field to the left of this slider.
 4. Click on a **Linear** or **Log** bin spacing to create the bin map.
 5. The bin map appears in the bin table. The first cell lists bin 1's lower boundary. The second cell lists bin 1's upper boundary, which is also bin 2's lower boundary. The third cell lists bin 2's upper boundary/bin 3's lower boundary, and so on, until the final cell, which lists the upper boundary of the largest bin.
 6. Press **Commit** and wait for commit bar to complete. This process downloads the bin map to the histogram electronics.

Pressing the **Under** button activates the undersized particle display on the histogram. When this option is activated, the histogram will display the underflow bin beneath the smallest particle bin. The underflow bin contains all detected particles bigger than the trigger threshold but smaller than the lower limit of the first bin. (See section 12.0 for a definition of the trigger threshold.) The **Under** button darkens when underflow display is activated.

Pressing the **Over** button activates the oversized particle display on the histogram. When this option is activated, the histogram will display the overflow bin after the last largest particle bin. The overflow bin contains all detected particles larger than the upper size limit of the last bin. The **Over** button darkens when overflow display is activated.

The **Clear** button clears the bin map.

The **Load** button loads a saved file into the bin map, while the **Save** button saves the current bin map to file. Clicking on either button brings up a window that allows the user to navigate to the desired file. By default, bin maps are saved in the `C:\DMT\Spectrometer Support` directory as `.map` files. **Note:** The `Last Map.txt` file holds the name of the last map file to be loaded or saved. It should not be edited by the user.

10.0 Histogram Tab

This tab displays histograms, sets integration times, and initiates data logging. It is shown in Figure 25.

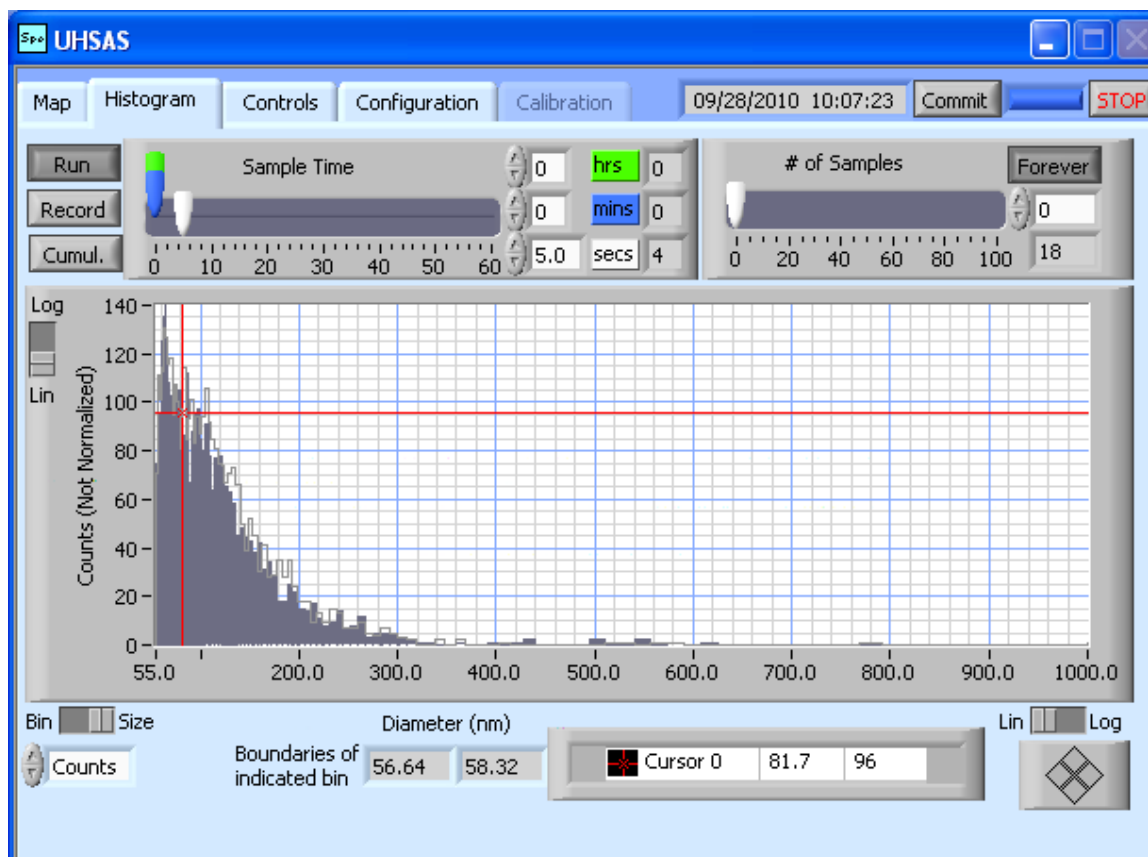


Figure 25: Histogram Tab

The slider bar on the top left of the screen allows the user to set the sample time. This determines the length of time over which counts are accumulated. At the end of the set time, the histogram data are written to the record file, if recording is enabled, and the histogram is reset. If the serial port is being used, this is also when data are broadcast out to the serial port. The sample time is set using the slider controls (the green control for hours, the blue for minutes, and the white for seconds), or by directly entering numeric values into the white fields to right of the slider control. The gray boxes to the right of the “hrs,” “mins,” and “seconds” labels show the time that the current sample has been accumulating.

The controls on the top right of the screen allow the user to set the number of cycles of accumulation time to be performed. When the number of actual samples exceeds this set point, the histogram stops running and the display stops updating. There are several ways to set the number of samples. The user can adjust the slider control, type a number directly in the white box, or click on the arrows to the left of the box. If **Forever** is selected, the instrument cycles indefinitely. The present cycle number is shown in the gray box just above the histogram.

The **Run** button starts data collection and the histogram display. This button also resets the number of samples to zero.

The **Record** button records the histogram data to a file. Clicking on this button will bring up a browser window that allows the user to specify a file location; the default file is `C:\DMT\Spectrometer Data\YYYYMMDDhhmmss.xls`. Choosing an existing file appends the data with a new header.

The **Cumul** button puts the histogram in cumulative mode. In this mode, the y-axis displays particle counts from the current bin plus counts from all larger sized bins. Note that cumulative data do not get written to the recorded data file. Cumulative mode can be entered or stopped while a histogram is stopped or running.

The **Bin/Size** switch in the bottom left specifies whether the x-axis labels display the bin number or the bin boundaries. Note that bin boundaries may be in mV or μsec (i.e., rather than units of size) if volts or time have been selected as the binning criterion on the **Map** tab. Refer to the bin map tab to identify bins, or use the cursor to read the bin boundaries which are reported at the lower left of the page (see following section).

The control at the bottom left of the Histogram tab allows users to specify whether the y-axis should graph counts or number concentration ($\text{counts}/\text{cm}^3$).

Moving the red cursor along the x-axis allows the user to examine data from a particular bin in more detail. Specifically, for the selected bin, the program will display the bin boundaries and exact particle count or concentration in the fields at the bottom of the screen. On the histogram display, a red horizontal line appears that highlights the y-axis value for the relevant bin.

To move the cursor one bin forward or backward from its current location, click on the right-most or left-most squares in the diamond control box.

10.1 Autoscaling

The UHSAS software always autoscales the x axis. The y-axis is autoscaled by default, but can be fixed. For a fixed y-axis, right click in the graph and uncheck the “autoscale y” option. You can also reset the y-axis scale by typing directly into the axis labels. Do not attempt to type numbers into the x-axis labels or select “autocale x” after right-clicking on the graph, as doing so may interfere with the data display.

11.0 Controls Tab

The **Controls** tab sets the sample flow and monitors other parameters including sheath flow, sample block temperature and pressure, and laser and cavity characteristics. The air flows are measured with electronic flow controllers or meters.

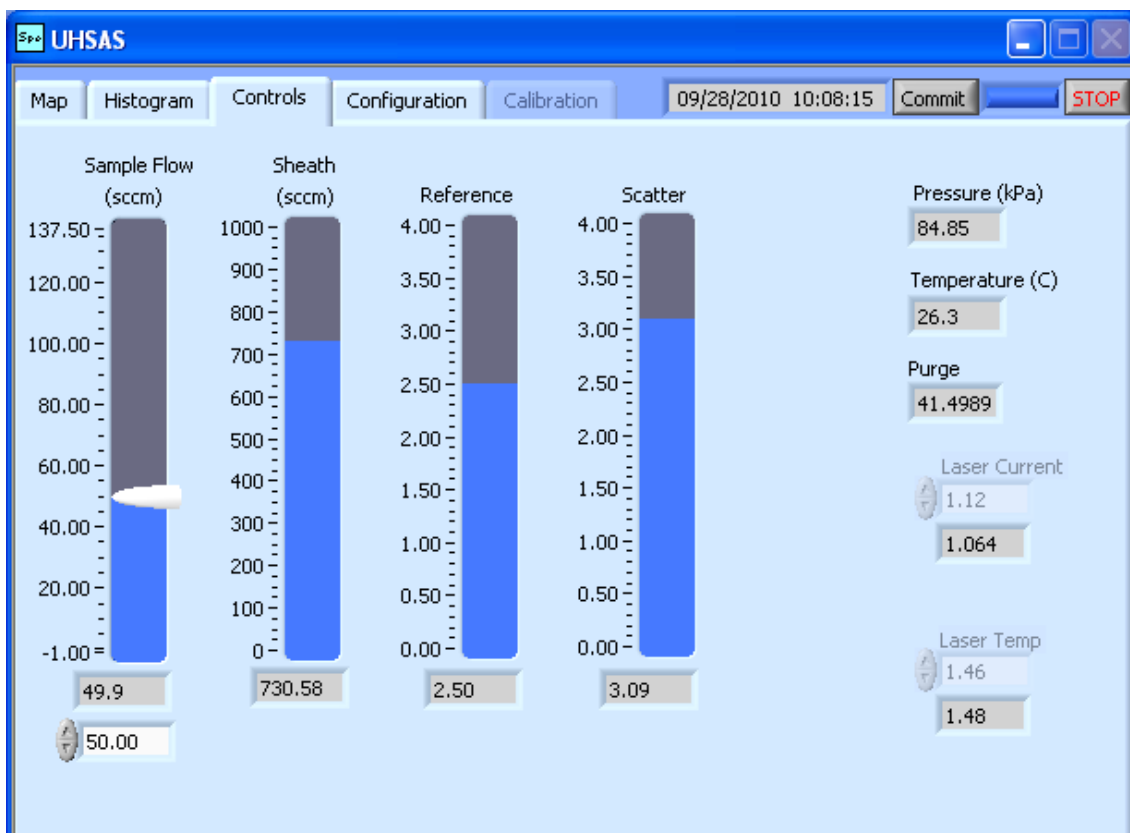


Figure 26: Controls Tab

The **Sample Flow** is both monitored and set on the **Controls** tab. The user can set the sample flow by using the white slider or by typing a number directly into the white box

in the lower left of the window. The actual sample flow, which may differ from the set flow, is listed in the gray box underneath the Sample Flow slider control. The actual flow is also indicated by the blue portion of the flow meter.

The meters to the right of the sample flow indicate the current **Sheath flow** (sccm), **Reference** value (V), and **Scatter** value (V). The sheath flow is the flow of the buffer surrounding the sample air; it should be 600-800 sccm. Reference denotes the laser reference voltage from the monitor photodiode. Ideally, this voltage should be between 2.25 and 2.75, although the instrument typically works as long as the reference value is .9 - 2.97 V. The scatter value is the background DC molecular scatter level from the APD, which should read around 2 - 2.5 V when the pump laser is on.

The **Temperature** field displays the ambient temperature, while the **Pressure** field shows atmospheric pressure.

If a purge flow has been installed, the **Purge** monitor displays the purge flow, which should be 20 - 50 sccm. The purge flow provides fresh air for the optics and helps keep them clean.

Laser current displays the pump laser current in amps. The lower display box is the actual current, while the upper display is the set point. The set point is locked, and changing it may degrade the instrument's performance. The actual laser current and the set point should be close but not the same. An **ON/OFF** button appears beneath the actual current when a password has been entered on the **Configuration** tab. Use this button turn the laser current on and off.

Laser temp displays the pump laser temperature in arbitrary units. The lower display box is the actual temperature, while the upper box displays the set point. The set point is locked, and changing it may degrade the instrument's performance. As with the laser current parameter, the laser temp's set point and actual values should be close but not the same. The laser temp value for a laser at room temperature should be approximately 1.0.

12.0 Configuration Tab

This tab displays the instrument configuration parameters. Note that some of these parameters are protected and cannot be changed unless the user logs in by typing a password in the **Password** field and then clicking on the **Enter Password** button. To

revert to normal operation (i.e., not a password-protected mode), click on the **Revert Mode** button. Figure 27 shows the **Configuration** tab in Calibration mode.

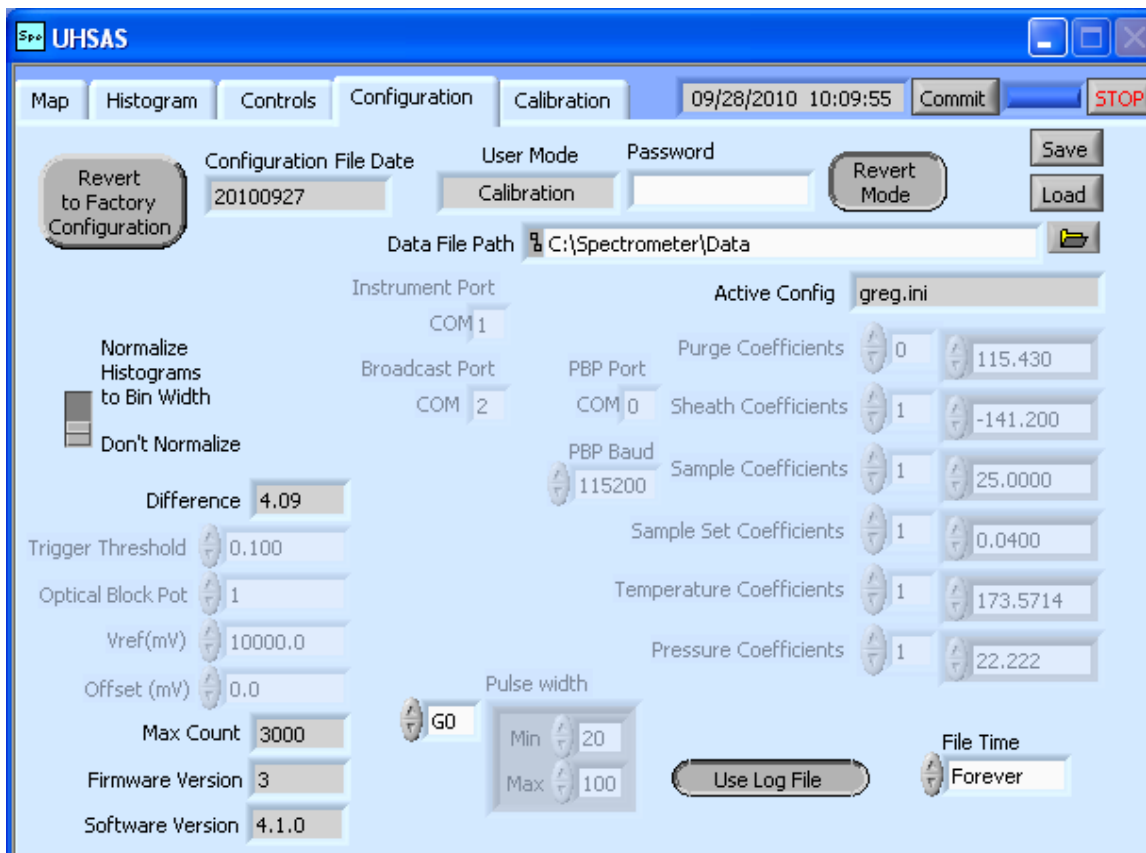


Figure 27: Configuration Tab

Clicking on **Revert to Factory Configuration** reverts all the parameters to their original default values. These parameters are stored in separate configuration file, `factory.ini`, which should not be modified.


The **Configuration File Date** field lists the date the configuration file was last modified in YYYYMMDD format.

Clicking the **Save** button saves the present instrument configuration to a file. When this button is clicked, the system will prompt the user for a file name. The file must be saved in the directory `C:\DMT\Spectrometer Support`. As stated above, the factory provided configuration file, `factory.ini`, should not be overwritten.

Note: Pressing the **Save** button saves not only the **Configuration** tab parameters but those on other tabs as well, such as flow rates, sample times, and so on. (The **Map** tab is the exception; it has its own **Save** button.) After configuring the UHSAS the

way you want it, pressing **Save** on the **Configuration** tab will retain the settings you want.

The **Load** button loads a saved instrument configuration file. The user is prompted for a file name.

The **Data File Path** field specifies the default directory where data files are saved and loaded. This directory can be changed either by typing in a new directory or by clicking on the folder icon  to the right of the path. **Note:** When using the folder icon to navigate to a new directory, select the desired directory in the file dialog box and then hit the button labeled “Press ME! Don’t Press Save.” Do not press the **Save** button.

The **Active Config** field displays the configuration file the instrument is currently using.

The **Instrument Port** should be set to COM1.

Broadcast Port indicates the number of the serial port to which the instrument is sending data, if applicable. If a serial port is not being used, the **Broadcast Port** field is set to zero and data are written only to the data file on the computer. Note that the information being sent to the serial port is identical to that going to the data file.

The **Normalize Histograms to Bin Width** switch determines the default normalization setting for the histogram.

The **Difference** field is not used.

Trigger Threshold is a very important and somewhat subtle parameter. It specifies the smallest signal voltage (in Volts on G3) that will register as a particle. It is like the lowest threshold on a typical instrument, in that events that are smaller than this signal size will not initiate a count. Everything above this signal size will initiate a count, as long as the event satisfies the timing criteria. However, in this instrument, the trigger threshold may not have anything to do with the lowest selected bin. For example, the trigger threshold might be set to 0.100 V with this signal size corresponding to a 55 nm particle. The user can select a lowest bin of 60 nm, so that particle triggers between 55 and 60 nm will not appear as counts. (They will appear in the underflow bin if underflow counting is selected; see section 9.0.) Or, the user could select a lowest bin of 50 to 54.9 nm. No counts will appear in this bin, since the trigger threshold is set to a signal size corresponding to a 55 nm particle.

The **Optical Block Pot** is not used.

Vref should be either 10000 mV or 10240, depending on the instrument.

Offset allows user to specify a voltage offset in the electronics chain of the highest gain channel (G3). It is typically a few mV and should not be important.

The **Max Count** field lists the maximum number of particles the UHSAS can process per second. At particle concentrations over this number, the instrument generates a warning and performance may be compromised.

The **Revision #** lists the software revision number, while **Version** displays the firmware revision number.

For each of the gain stages (G0, G1, G2, G3), the **Pulse Width** control sets a window for acceptable particle pulse widths in μsec . A particle pulse must be between these two times for it to be counted.

On the right side of the **Configuration** tab are coefficients for converting the voltages for various sensors and flow controllers into meaningful units. These coefficients are displayed for the following sensors and flow controllers:

- **Purge Coefficients** are for the purge flow sensor.
- **Sheath Coefficients** are for the sheath flow sensor.
- **Sample Coefficients** are for the sample flow sensor.
- **Sample Set Coefficients** are for the sample flow controllers.
- **Temperature Coefficients** are for the electronics box temperature reading in $^{\circ}\text{K}$, i.e. the temperature of the ambient air just as it enters the instrument.
- **Pressure Coefficients** are for the ambient pressure (kPa).

The coefficients should not need to be changed, and the controls have been grayed out.

The **Use Log File** button determines whether or not a recording session will generate a log file.

File Time sets the maximum time that data are recorded to a single file. When this time is exceeded, the program starts writing to a new file. New files are synchronized to start in even increments after midnight. For instance, when **File Time** is set to 12 hours, new files start at midnight and noon. The first new file will begin at whichever time comes first—for example, if the initial file was begun at 9:31 a.m., the second file will start at noon. When **File Time** is set to 8 hours, new files start at midnight, 8 a.m., and 4 p.m. When **File Time** is set to every 6 hours, new files start at midnight, 6 a.m., noon, and 6 p.m., and so on. When **File Time** is set to Forever, all data are

recorded to the original file and no new files are started until the user stops recording and starts a new file.

13.0 Calibration Tab

This tab performs the calibration functions of the instrument. It is only accessible when the user has logged on via the **Configuration** tab and the system is in calibration mode. There are several sub-tabs on this tab, which are described in the following sections.

For the theory behind the calibration process and step-by-step instructions on calibrating the instrument, see Section 5.0.

13.1 Calibration Curve Sub-tab

This tab shows the instrument's calibration curve. This curve converts the signal sizes in mV into the voltages as they would appear on the highest gain stage (G3). The different parts of the calibration curve sub-tab are shown below.

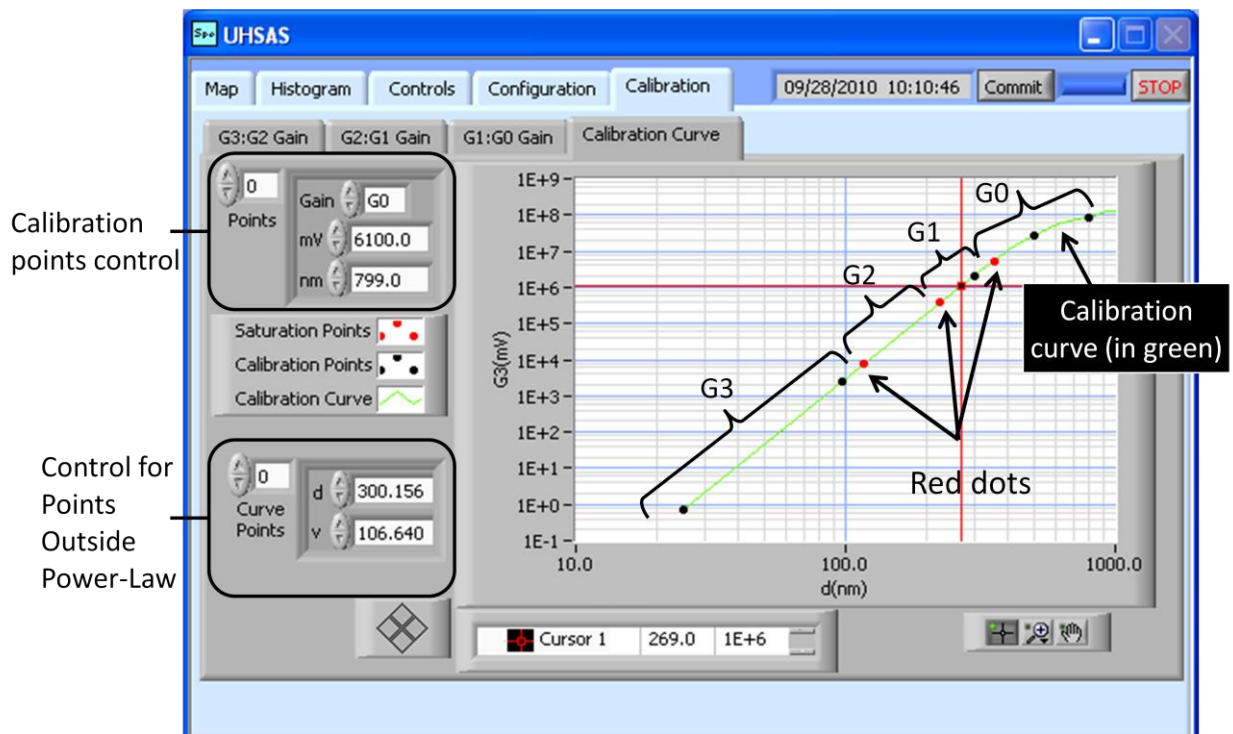


Figure 28: Calibration Curve Sub-Tab

13.1.1 Calibration Points Control

The points control specifies the reference calibration particles and their signal sizes. The points control is an array of triplets consisting of the following data:

- 1.) **Gain**, the gain stage on which the particle signal appears
- 2.) **mV**, the signal size in mV of the particle signal
- 3.) **nm**, the size of the particle in nm.

The **Points** field lists the element in the array that is currently being displayed. The array begins with element zero. In Figure 28, the Calibration Points control is displaying element (point) zero.

The number of reference particles determines the length of the array. At least one point needs to be specified to calibrate the unit. This is normally the NIST 100 nm SRM, which appears as ~4000 mV on G3. Any number of reference particles can be used to calibrate the instrument. For instructions on how to measure particles and enter calibration points see Section 5.0. The cal-curve will be interpolated between reference points in log-log space.

13.1.2 Calibration Curve

The calibration curve is shown in green on the graph. The x-axis of the graph shows particle size in nm, while the y-axis shows the instrument response in millivolts as it would appear on the highest gain stage (G3).³

The curve is determined by both theoretical and empirical means. On a theoretical level, the power-law relationship (hard-coded into the system) and Mie curve (entered in the control described in section 13.1.3) determine the basic curve. The power-law relationship determines the curve for particles smaller than 200-300 nm, while the Mie curve determines points for larger particles. This theoretical curve is then fitted to empirical data points entered into the **Points** control. These points are shown in white on the graph.

The region covered by each gain stage is indicated by the red dots on the graph. The red dots are the saturation levels of each gain stage—i.e., the largest particles measurable on each gain stage. For example, the region below the first red dot is covered by G3, the region between the first and second red dots is covered by G2, etc.

³ Note that the signal size of large particles is on the order of 10^6 mV on G3. Of course, these particles are measured on other gain stages with significantly less overall gain.

As noted above, the calibration points (white dots) provide the absolute calibration of the instrument: they move the curve up and down appropriately to convert voltage on various gain stages to particle size. There are two white points fixed by the instrument—one at 10 nm, and one at 300 nm. Unlike the other calibration points, these are not absolute references. They simply define the region of the instrument described by a power-law curve. They are used for forward and backward extrapolation of the curve from the real calibration points. For example, if the user supplies one calibration point, say at 100 nm, then the 10 nm point will be used to extrapolate a power-law curve downward from 100 nm and the 300 nm point will be used to extrapolate a power-law curve upward from 100 nm.

The red cursor can be moved to see specific x and y coordinates on the curve. These appear as numeric values in the white field beneath the graph.

13.1.3 Control for Points Outside the Power-Law

Above 300 nm, the calibration curve is defined by the calibration points specified in the lower left-hand corner of the screen. This is an array of points which specifies the relative signal size of particles above 300 nm. It is used to specify the *shape* of the calibration curve outside of the power-law response region. More precisely, it specifies the Mie curve of signal size (v) versus particle diameter (d) on the lowest gain channel (G0). The diameters specified are absolute in nm, and the signal size is specified as a relative number. This is the only gain stage that can be set to something other than a 6th power law.

The **Curve Points** field lists the element in the array that is currently being displayed. The array begins with element zero. In Figure 28, the control is displaying element (point) zero.

13.2 G3:G2 Gain, G2:G1 Gain, G1:G0 Gain (the Relative-Gain Sub-tabs)

These tabs are used to perform gain-ratio operations. The graphs show the gain and offset calculated from the sampled data points (Figure 29). This gain and offset, along with the calibration points, are then used during bin-map commitment to provide a seamless transition between gain stages.

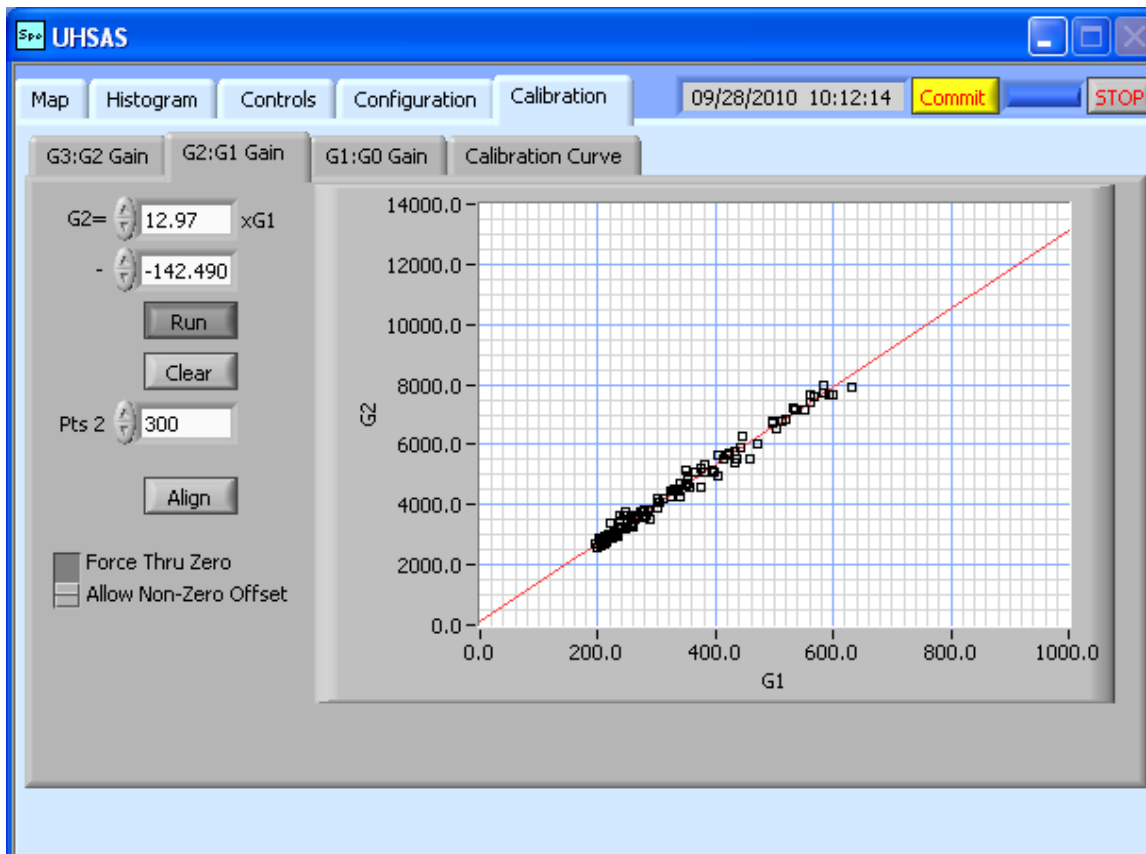


Figure 29: A Relative Gain Sub-Tab

The **Clear** button clears out old data if users have made adjustments.

The **Run** button initiates relative-gain calibration. The process will continue until the user presses the **Run** button again or until the instrument has processed the number of particles stipulated in the **Pts** control.

The **Pts** control sets the number of particles the UHSAS processes before relative-gain calibration is complete.

The **Align** button, visible only on the **G2:G1** tab, is not used.

The switch in the bottom left of the screen indicates whether the gain-ratio function should be forced through the (0,0) point. Typically this control should be set to “Allow Non-Zero Offset.”

For step-by-step instructions on relative-gain calibration, see section 5.2.2.

Appendix A: Output File Data Channels

The UHSAS data file is an .xls file. For each sampling period, the file records the channels listed below. Sampling periods are listed in rows, while data channels are listed in columns.

Date: The current date in mm/dd/yyyy format.

Time: The time at which the current sample began.

Accum. (sec): The current sample time setting, i.e. the number of seconds during which the sample accumulates counts.

Scatter (Volts): The background DC molecular scatter level from the APD, which is typically around 1.5 - 2.75 V. If this drops by 25% or more, the laser optics may need to be cleaned.

Current (Volts): The current being supplied to the instrument.

Sample (sccm): The flow of the sample air, which should be between 1 and 100 sccm. The instrument is factory calibrated at 50 sccm, so this is a good sample flow setting.

Ref. (Volts): The laser reference voltage from the monitor photodiode. Ideally, this voltage should be between 2.25 and 2.75, although the instrument typically works as long as the reference value is .9 - 3.1 V. If the reference voltage drops by 25% or more, the laser optics need to be cleaned.

Temp (Volts): The voltage from the temperature sensor.

Sheath (sccm): The flow of the sheath air, which is typically 700 sccm.

Diff. (Volts): Not used.

Box (K): The temperature of the electronic box, i.e. the temperature just as the sample enters the instrument.

Purge (sccm): The flow of the purge air. The purge flow is used to keep the laser optics clean.

Pres. (kPa): The ambient pressure.

Aux. (Volts): Not used.

Flow (sccm): Not used.

After these channels, the file lists the particle counts for each bin. The bin boundaries appear in the header of each column.

Appendix B: Cables

Canister flight cable

Canister inter-wiring cable

Ground test cable

Appendix C: Anti-Icing Options

While the normal operation of the UHSAS in an aerosol environment does not require the use of anti-icing equipment, such is provided and configured for 28VDC operation.

A 105 watt heating unit consisting of three 35-Watt heater elements is located in the tip of the inlet horn. The main function is to inhibit ice buildup that may clog the inlet horn and seriously degrade *in situ* sampling.

A second 100-Watt heater is mounted in the base of the inlet horn. Its purpose is to reduce ice collection in the area where a 90-degree turn of the ambient air stream is made prior to exiting the sample horn.

A third heater of 10 Watts is attached to the inlet jet needle. This heater provides heat necessary to prevent clogging of the needle inlet by ice and/or liquid water.

These heaters are normally wired in parallel for maximum heat and provide a total of 215 Watts of heat in this configuration. Other wiring and heater sizes are possible and would obviously result in different power usages and heater outputs.

It is recommended that the heater power be activated soon after take-off.

Appendix D: Revisions to Manual

Rev. Date	Rev No.	Summary	Section
10-14-09	A	Reformatted sections and figures; inserted title page, TOC, and legal disclaimer	All
2-4-10	A-1	Inserted Signal and Power Wiring Diagram	F
4-12-10	B	Updated manual generally Revised software sections Revised Signal and Power Wiring Diagram Revised Interconnect Diagram	All
10-12-10	C	Updated screen shots to reflect new software, updated data path names	All
11-10-10	D	Revised acceptable values for Scatter (Volts)	Appendix A
		Provided timeline for troubleshooting tasks	6.2