

To the
High Energy Accelerator Research Organization, KEK
Director General Prof. Atsuto Suzuki

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305-0801 Japan

February 5, 2013

Dear Prof. Suzuki,

We are writing on behalf of the Belle member institutes to inform you of the position of the Belle collaboration on the data loss that occurred during the transition from the old B computer to the new KEK CC system in early 2012.

Belle recognizes that about 5% of the raw data and about 2.6% of the Ypipi skim data are permanently lost. While this loss is extremely regrettable, it is also necessary and useful to put it in the proper context:

The vast majority of Belle physics studies are not affected by this data loss, as they are not based on these data sets. The most critical data sets (namely HadronBJ, TauSkim and LowMulti) that were gleaned from the raw data have been properly transferred; in addition, redundant copies of these are available outside of KEK. Only a handful of analyses are based solely on the Ypipi skim. For these cases, we estimate that the loss will result in a small increase of the statistical uncertainty; nevertheless, the overall physics potential will not be affected.

In addition, some user data were also lost. This has caused some moderate inconvenience to the affected collaborators but has had no impact on the physics potential of the Belle experiment.

In summary, we estimate that the impact of the data loss on the physics potential of the Belle experiment is somewhere between zero and very minor. The collaboration feels that this data loss was an unfortunate accident and does not assign blame nor fault to KEK organization for it. On the contrary, we highly appreciate the effort of the organization to keep our multi-petabyte datasets safe and accessible for hundreds of users over so many years now. Without this excellent infrastructure, Belle could not have achieved the great physics results that it has. Events like the 2012 data loss make us realize clearly how difficult the task of data preservation actually is.

Best regards,



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