

Discussion Of The Preliminary Choice Of The Median

As The Sampling Aggregation Technique For The Frequency Response Standard

The Frequency Responsive Reserve Standard Drafting Team (FRRSDT) performed extensive empirical studies and engaged in lively discussions in an attempt to determine the best aggregation technique for a sample set size of about 25 events. Mean, median, and linear regression techniques were used on a trial basis with the data that was available during the early phases of the effort.

A key characteristic of the “aggregation challenge” is related to the use of actual net interchange data for measuring frequency response. The tie line flow measurements are varying continuously due to other operational phenomena occurring concurrently with the provision of frequency response. (See Appendix 1 for details.) All samples have noise in them, as most operational personnel who have computed the frequency response of their Balancing Authority can attest. What has also become apparent to the FRRSDT is that while the majority of the frequency response samples have similar levels of noise in them, a few of the samples also contain large data errors. And with the sample set size of interest, it is very common to have the errors in these few samples to be very large and asymmetric. For example, one Balancing Authority’s subject matter expert observed recently that 4 out of 31 samples had a much larger error contribution than the other 27 samples, and that 3 out of 4 of the samples grossly underestimated the frequency response. The median value demonstrated greater resiliency to this data quality problem than the mean with this data set. (The median has also demonstrated superiority to linear regression in the presence of data quality problems in other analyses conducted by the FRRSDT, but the linear regression showed better performance than the mean.)

The above can be demonstrated with a relatively simple example. Let's assume that a Balancing Authority's true frequency response has an average value of -200 MW/ .1 Hz. Let's also assume that this Balancing Authority installed "special" perfect metering on key loads and generators, so that we could know the true frequency response of each sample. And then we will compare them with that measured by typical tie line flow metering, with the kind of noise and error that occurs commonly and "not so commonly". Let's start with the following 4 samples a common level of noise, with MW/ .1 Hz as the unit of measurement.

Perfect measurement	noise	Samples from tie lines
-190	-30	-220
-210	-20	-230
-220	10	-210
-180	20	-160
-200	Mean	-205
-200	Median	-215

Now let's add a fifth sample, which is highly contaminated with noise and error that grossly underestimates frequency response.

Perfect measurement	noise	Samples from tie lines
-190	-30	-220
-210	-20	-230
-220	10	-210
-180	20	-160
-200	250	+50
-200	Mean	-154
-200	Median	-210

It is clear from the above simplistic example that the mean drops by about 25% while the median is affected minimally by the single highly contaminated value.

Based on the analyses performed thus far, the FRRSDT believes that the median's superior resiliency to this type of data quality problem makes it the best aggregation technique at this time. However, the FRRSDT sees merit and promise in performing future research with sample filtering combined with a technique such as linear regression. If this (or some other) future approach can be developed and demonstrate superiority to the median, then the FRRSDT will recommend its usage over the median.

Linear regression shows superior performance with respect to the elimination of noise because the measured data is weighted by the size of the frequency change associated with the event. Since the noise is independent from frequency change, the greater weighting on larger events provides a superior technique for reducing the effect of noise on the results.

However, linear regression does not provide a better method when dealing with other errors of greater magnitude than noise. There are only two alternatives to improve over the use of median when dealing with these larger errors:

1. Increase the sample size, or
2. Actively eliminate outliers due to data error.

Unfortunately, the first alternative, increasing the sample size is not available because significantly more sample events are not available within the measurement time period of one year. The FRRSDT is investigating linear regression techniques that have an active outlier elimination algorithm that would eliminate data that lie outside ranges of the 96th percentile and 99th percentile, for example.

Appendix 1

Data Quality Concerns Related To The Use Of The Actual Net Interchange Value

Actual net interchange for a typical Balancing Authority (BA) is the summation of its tie lines to other BAs. In some cases, there are pseudo-ties in it which reflect the effective removal or addition of load and/or generation from another BA, or it could include supplemental regulation as well. But in the typical scenario, actual net interchange values that are extracted from EMS data archiving can be influenced by data latency times in the data acquisition process, and also any timestamp skewing in the archival process.

Of greater concern, however, are the inevitable variations of other operating phenomena occurring concurrently with a frequency event. The impacts of these phenomena are superimposed on actual net interchange values along with the frequency response that we wish to measure through the use of the actual net interchange value.

To explore this issue further, let's begin with the idealized condition:

- frequency is fairly stable at some value near or a little below 60 Hz
- ACE of the non-contingent BA of interest is 0 and has been 0 for an extended period, and AGC control signals have not been issued recently
- Actual net interchange is "on schedule", and there are no schedule changes in the immediate future
- BA load is flat
- All generators not providing AGC are at their targets
- Variable generation such as wind and solar are not varying
- Operators have not directed any manual movements of generation recently

And when the contingency occurs in this idealized state, the change in actual net interchange will be measuring only the decline in load due to lesser frequency and generator governor response, and, none of the contaminating influences. While the ACE may become negative due to the actual frequency response being less than that called for by the frequency bias setting within the BA's AGC system, this

contaminating influence on measuring frequency response will not appear in the actual net interchange value if the measurement interval ends before the generation or AGC responds.

Now let's explore the sensitivity of the resultant frequency response sampling to the relaxation of these idealized circumstances.

1. The "60 Hz load" increases moderately due to time of day concurrent with the frequency event. If the frequency event happens before AGC or operator-directed manual load adjustments occur, then the actual net interchange will be reduced by the moderate increase in load and the frequency response will be underestimated. But if the frequency event happens while AGC response and/or manual adjustments occur, then the actual net interchange will be increased by the AGC response (and/or manual adjustments) and the frequency response will be overestimated.
2. The "60 Hz load" decreases moderately due to time of day concurrent with the frequency event. If the frequency event happens before AGC or operator-directed manual load adjustments occur, then the actual net interchange will be increased by the moderate reduction in load and the frequency response will be overestimated. But if the frequency event happens while AGC response and/or manual adjustments occur, then the actual net interchange will be decreased by the AGC response (and/or manual adjustments) and the frequency response will be underestimated.
3. In anticipation of increasing load during the next hour, the operator increases manual generation before the load actually appears. If the frequency event happens while the generation "leading" the load is increasing, then the actual net interchange will be increased by the increase in manual generation and the frequency response will be overestimated. But if the frequency event occurs when the result of AGC signals sent to offset the operator's leading actions take effect, then the actual net interchange will be decreased and the frequency response is underestimated.
4. In anticipation of decreasing load during the next hour, the operator decreases manual generation before the load actually declines. If the

frequency event happens while the generation “leading” the load downward is decreasing, then the actual net interchange will be decreased by the reduction in manual generation and the frequency response will be underestimated. But if the frequency event occurs when the result of AGC signals sent to offset the operator’s leading actions take effect, then the actual net interchange will be increased and the frequency response is overestimated.

5. A schedule change to export more energy is made at 5 minutes before the top of the hour. The BA’s “60 Hz load” is not changing. The schedule change is small enough that the operator is relying on upward movement of generators on AGC to provide the additional energy to be exported. The time at which the AGC generators actually begin to provide the additional energy is dependent on how much time passes before the AGC algorithm gets out of its deadbands, the individual generator control errors get large enough for sending out the control signal, and maybe 20 seconds to 3 minutes for the response to be effected. The key point here is that it is not clear when the effects of a schedule change, as manifested in a change in generation and then ultimately a change in actual net interchange, will occur.
6. With the expected penetration of wind in the near future, unanticipated changes in their output will tend to affect actual net interchange and add noise to the frequency response observation process.

To a greater or lesser extent, 1 through 4 above are happening continuously for the most part with most BAs in the Eastern and Western Interconnections. The frequency response is buried within the typical hour to hour operational cacophony superimposed on actual net interchange values. The choice of metrics will be important to artfully extract frequency response from the noise and other error.