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MORPHOLOGICAL CATALOGUE OF GALAXIES (MCG) OF  
VORONTSOV-VELYAMINOV ET AL, 1962-1968 (NASA)  
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DECEMBER 1982

DOCUMENTATION FOR THE MACHINE-READABLE VERSION

OF THE

MORPHOLOGICAL CATALOGUE OF GALAXIES (MCG)

OF VORONTSOV-VELYAMINOV ET AL. 1962-1968

Wayne H. Warren Jr.

December 1982

National Space Science Data Center (NSSDC)/  
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Goddard Space Flight Center  
Greenbelt, Maryland 20771

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Section 1 - INTRODUCTION AND SOURCE REFERENCES .....	1-1
Section 2 - TAPE CONTENTS .....	2-1
Section 3 - TAPE CHARACTERISTICS .....	3-1
Section 4 - REMARKS, MODIFICATIONS, ACKNOWLEDGMENTS AND REFERENCES ...	4-1
Section 5 - SAMPLE LISTING .....	5-1

LIST OF TABLES

Table

1 - Tape Format .....	2-1
2 - Tape Characteristics .....	3-1
3 - Individual Corrections Made to the MCG .....	4-1

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ABSTRACT

Detailed descriptions of modifications, corrections and the record format are provided for the machine-readable version of the *Morphological Catalogue of Galaxies* (Vorontsov-Velyaminov et al. 1962-68). In addition to hundreds of individual corrections, a detailed comparison of the machine-readable with the published catalogue resulted in the addition of 116 missing objects, the deletion of 10 duplicate records, and a format modification to increase storage efficiency.

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## SECTION 1 - INTRODUCTION AND SOURCE REFERENCES

The *Morphological Catalogue of Galaxies (MCG)* is a compilation of information for approximately 34,000 galaxies found and examined on the Palomar Observatory Sky Survey (POSS). Individual identifiers are assigned for about 29,000 galaxies and information on the remaining 5,000 is present in the extensive notes of the published catalogues (Vorontsov-Velyaminov *et al.* 1962-1968). The catalogue is structured according to the POSS zones and is numbered from +15 (corresponding to +90°) to +01 (+06° zone) and +00 (equatorial zone) to -05 (-30° zone); the fields are numbered with increasing right ascension. The original goal of the compilation was to be complete for galaxies brighter than magnitude 15.1, but the final catalogue lists many objects considerably fainter.

Information given in the original printed volumes includes: cross-identifications to the NGC (Dreyer 1888) and IC (Dreyer 1895, 1908) catalogues, equatorial coordinates for 1950.0, magnitude, estimated sizes and intensities of the bright inner region and the entire object, estimated inclination, and coded description (by symbols) of the appearance of the galaxy. Each field is then followed by notes on individual objects. All of the above data except the coded description are included in the machine version, except that special coding (e.g. for uncertainty or source designation) is not present (other than for the NGC/IC cross identifications [added at the Astronomical Data Center for this machine version]). Although the notes are not computerized, the presence of a note in the original is flagged in the machine version.

This document describes in detail the machine-readable version of the *MCG* currently being distributed from the Astronomical Data Center. It is intended to enable users to read and process the data without problems or guesswork. For additional details concerning the galaxy classifications, measurements, and descriptions, the source references should be consulted. A copy of this document should accompany any machine-readable copy of the catalogue.

### SOURCE REFERENCES

- Vorontsov-Velyaminov, B. A. and Krasnogorskaya, A. A. 1962, *Morphological Catalogue of Galaxies, Part I, Catalogue of 7200 Galaxies from +90° to +45° Declination* (Moscow: Sternberg Institute 32).
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- Vorontsov-Velyaminov, B. A. and Arhipova, A. A. 1964, *Morphological Catalogue of Galaxies, Part II, Catalogue of 9650 Galaxies from +45° to +15° Declination* (Moscow: Sternberg Institute 34).
- Vorontsov-Velyaminov, B. A. and Arhipova, A. A. 1968, *Morphological Catalogue of Galaxies, Part IV, Catalogue of 5410 Galaxies from -9° to -33° Declination* (Moscow: Sternberg Institute 38).

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SECTION 2 - TAPE CONTENTS

A byte-by-byte description of the contents of the machine-readable MCG is given in Table 1. The suggested format specifications are for FORTRAN formatted read statements and can be modified depending upon individual programming and processing requirements. Since all data fields contain blanks for missing data (only the MCG and coordinate fields are never blank) care must be exercised when processing the catalogue for search or computational purposes (the situation is simplified here because there are no data with valid zero values). Alternate format specifications are given in parentheses.

Table 1. Tape Format. *Morphological Catalogue of Galaxies*

Byte(s)	Units	Suggested Format	Description
1-13	---	13A1	MCG number. Bytes 1-3 contain the characters "MCG", bytes 4-6 denote the Palomar Observatory Sky Survey (POSS) field in which the galaxy is located, numbered in 6° zones (from +15° at the North Celestial Pole to +00 at the equator and to -05 in the southern sky). The sign of the field is always in byte 4. Bytes 7 and 10 contain hyphens. Bytes 8-9 give the number of the field in increasing right ascension (from a minimum of 1 field at +90° to 60 fields at +00°); bytes 11-13 contain the number of this galaxy in the field.
14	---	A1	a, b, ... for components of multiple systems.
15	---	A1	Asterisk (*) if there is a note for this galaxy at the end of the field in the published edition; otherwise blank.
16-19	---	I4	Catalogue number from the NGC (Dreyer 1888) or the IC (Dreyer 1895, 1908); otherwise blank.
20	---	A1	a, b, c for components of NGC or IC object; slash (/) to denote NGC(IC) and NGC(IC) + 1 numbers together (e.g. NGC 5906/7); a colon (:) indicates an uncertain identification according to the authors (? in published catalogue) [a / occurs in byte 23 in one case

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Table 1. (continued)

Byte(s)	Units	Suggested Format	Description
			(MCG+10-23-065) where a : occurs in byte 22].
21	---	A1	Asterisk (*) if bytes 16-19 contain an IC identification; otherwise blank.
22-23	hours	I2	Right ascension ( $\alpha$ ) for equinox 1950.0.
24-28	min	F5.2	$\alpha$ . Precision reported varies from whole minutes to hundredths of a minute. The greater precision is used to discriminate objects close together, but does not indicate greater accuracy.
29-31	°	I3 (A1,I2)	Declination ( $\delta$ ) for equinox 1950.0. The sign is always in byte 29.
32	---	1X	Blank
33-35	'	F3.0 (I2,A1)	$\delta$ . A decimal point can occur in byte 35, denoting that the original measurement had a 5 in the tenths column.
36-40	mag	F5.2 (A5)	Magnitude taken from various sources in order of preference (Holmberg 1958; Humason, Mayall and Sandage 1956; Pettit 1954; Reiz 1941; Bigay 1951). In the published version, various symbols are used to indicate the sources above, e.g. surrounded by (), [], or //. These codes are not present in the machine version; however, magnitudes from Holmberg (1958) are reported to a hundredth and Humason et al. (1956) to a tenth. Any other coding is indistinguishable in the present machine version. Blank for missing data.
41-45	0'1	F5.1	Diameter of the major axis of the bright inner part of the galaxy. Blank if absent. The special coding (: for uncertainty) is not present in this machine version. If only one number is given in the published version, it is given in this field and bytes 46-50 are blank. (To clarify the units, the reporting of all diameters in tenths

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Table 1. (continued)

Byte(s)	Units	Suggested Format	Description
			means that MCG+15-01-001 has inner region dimensions of 0!2 x 0!05 and overall dimensions of 1!6 x 1!3 [divide diameters by ten to obtain arcminutes].)
46-50	0'1	F5.1	Diameter of the minor axis of the bright inner part of the galaxy. Blank if absent or if only one diameter is reported.
51-55	0'1	F6.1	Diameter of the major axis of the entire galaxy. Blank if no data. The special coding (e.g. : for uncertainty) used in the published catalogue is not present in the machine version. If only one number is given in the published edition (object round) it is given in this field and bytes 57-61 are blank. (The larger data field is required to accommodate M 31 at 1600' [MCG+07-02-016].)
57-61	0'1	F5.1	Diameter of the minor axis of the entire galaxy. Blank if absent or if only one diameter is reported.
62	---	I1 (A1)	Intensity of the inner region of the galaxy ( $I_g$ ) on a scale from 1 (completely black image) to 6 (image barely visible). Blank if absent.
63	---	I1 (A1)	Intensity of the outer region ( $I_o$ ) on same scale as above. Blank if absent.
64	---	I1 (A1)	Inclination ( $i$ ) of the principal plane estimated on a scale from 1 (face on) to 5 (edge on). Blank if absent.

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SECTION 3 - TAPE CHARACTERISTICS

The information contained in Table 2 is sufficient for a user to describe the indigenous characteristics of the machine-readable MCG to a computer. Information easily varied from installation to installation, such as block size (physical record length), blocking factor (number of logical records per physical record), total number of blocks, tape density, number of tracks, and internal coding (EBCDIC, ASCII, etc.) is not included. That information should always be transmitted if secondary copies are supplied to other users or installations.

Table 2. Tape Characteristics. *Morphological Catalogue of Galaxies.*

---

NUMBER OF FILES .....	1
LOGICAL RECORD LENGTH (BYTES) .....	64
RECORD FORMAT .....	FB*
TOTAL NUMBER OF LOGICAL RECORDS .....	29003

---

\*Fixed block length (last block may be short)

#### SECTION 4 - REMARKS, MODIFICATIONS, ACKNOWLEDGMENTS, AND REFERENCES

The magnetic tape version of the MCG was received from Dr. Robert S. Dixon of the Ohio State University Radio Observatory on 7 December 1981. As received, the catalogue consisted of 28904 records of length 90 bytes. Each logical record contained a number giving the approximate sequential position of the object in the original published catalogue volumes, but the machine version was ordered by right ascension. Upon listing the data and scanning some records manually, enough errors were found such that it was deemed necessary to check the records more closely.

The catalogue was sorted by MCG number from north to south to obtain the published order. Further checking revealed many hundreds of records in the MCG-01 zone with MCG+01 in bytes 1-6. At this time it was decided to review the published version in order to compare certain data items in detail, e.g. the "a, b, ..." suffixes on MCG and MCG IC numbers, the MCG and MCG IC numbers themselves, and the number of galaxies in each region. A complete count of the number of objects in each region was performed manually by scanning the published volumes and adding suffixed records to the highest number in each region. (This procedure was complicated by the fact that while one region might have the sequence ..., 15, 16a, 16b, 17, ..., another has ..., 15, 16, 16a, 16b, 17, ....) Following some initial corrections and the addition of an uncertainty symbol (:) to MCG IC identifications (in place of ? in the published catalogue) [since it is important to know about such uncertainties when using the catalogue for source identification] a computer program was written to make a count of the objects in each region, to count the total number of regions with at least one object, and to list all suffixed objects along the way (these had also been recorded during the manual count). The initial run on the partially corrected version gave 28950 objects in 824 occupied regions, while the manual count gave 29003 objects. A region-by-region count comparison revealed 26 regions with discrepant counts. The discrepancies were checked and individually resolved. Most corrections involved duplicate records and erroneous MCG numbers (two occupied regions were added due to the omission of MCG+10-01-001 and the correction of the MCG+05-40 records to MCG+05-41). The individual corrections found during the catalogue analysis are listed in Table 3. In addition to correcting the tabulated items, the following changes were made to the machine-readable version in order to make it more uniform, self-consistent, and storage efficient:

1. Many MCG and IC numbers were not right justified or were misaligned in the data field; these were corrected in 125 cases. The two bytes following the MCG IC field were not uniform in content (asterisks were usually in the byte following the MCG IC number, but sometimes not if an A or B were present; or sometimes the A, B, ... followed the MCG IC number and the asterisk was in the next byte. Question marks (?) were present following two MCG numbers. The question marks were changed to colons and colons were added to 111 MCG IC numbers as a result of the catalogue review. All components identifications (A, B, ...) were changed to lower case to agree with the published catalogue.

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2. The presence of preceding zeroes on NGC and IC numbers was not consistent, so all preceding zeroes were deleted. Although not important for reading the data, the records would not sort properly if a sort were performed on NGC and IC numbers.
3. Approximately five hundred MCG-01 records having erroneous plus (+) signs were corrected.
4. The format was modified by deleting all unused bytes (except the one between degrees and minutes of declination) and removing the sequential numbers (which were not correct in many cases where MCG numbers were corrected, thereby moving the record location, and which are no longer needed because the catalogue is now in published order).
5. Following all corrections, the modified catalogue was resorted in MCG published order. If needed for possible source identifications by right ascension searches, the records can easily be sorted by RA.

Table 3. Individual Corrections to the MCG.

MCG	Datum	For	Read	Remarks
+12-11-023	NGC	3654		Delete number
+12-19-002				Delete duplicate record
+12-19-004				Delete duplicate record
+12-20-002				Delete duplicate record
+11-01-001				Delete duplicate record
+11-04-002				Delete duplicate record
+10-01-001				Add from Addenda, Part III
+10-03-001	MCG	+10-01-001	+10-03-001	
	$\alpha$	00	01	
	$\delta$	+5902	+5749	
	mag	13.68	18	
	$d$	15 x 10	2 x 1.5	
	$D$	50 x 40	5	
	$I_d, I_D, i$		161	
+10-23-065	NGC	6127	6127/	
+09-13-029	NGC	2429	2429a	
+09-13-040	NGC	2429	2429b	
+09-14-006	NGC	2518	2518/	
+09-25-040	NGC	506	5906/	
+08-16-036	NGC	2686	2686a	
+08-16-037	NGC	2686	2686b	
+08-16-039	NGC	2687	2687b	
+08-23-022	D	4 x 1#5	4 x 1.5	
+08-27-003	NGC	2683	5683	
+08-27-032	NGC	2794	5794	
+08-27-034	MCG	+08-28-033	+08-28-034	Two records had 033
+08-32-001	MCG	+08-31-001	+08-32-001	
+08-34-009	MCG	+09-34-009	+08-34-009	
+07-05-024	NGC	846	846/	

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Table 3. (continued)

MCG	Datum	For	Read	Remarks
+07-26-056 to -059				Add 4 missing records
+07-28-018 to -062				Add 49 missing records
+07-27-017	NGC	4067	4067/	
+07-34-060				Delete duplicate record
+06-05-090				Add missing record
+06-05-091	α	0206.95	0207.1	
+06-06-074				Delete duplicate record
+06-20-021	MCG	-06-20-021	+06-20-021	
+06-25-009				Delete duplicate record
+06-25-016	NGC	3545	3545a	
+06-25-017	NGC	3545	3545b	
+06-28-033	NGC	4711	3804 *	Change NGC to IC
+06-29-014	NGC	4912	4912/	
+06-32-002	NGC	5579	5579/	
+06-32-005	MCG	+06-32-055	+06-32-005	
+06-34-007	IC	4542a	4542b	
+06-49-039	NGC	7318	7318a	
+06-49-040	NGC	7318	7318a	Both records are "a"
+05-05-036	NGC	760	760/	
+05-07-016	NGC	978	978a	
+05-07-017	NGC	978	978b	
+05-21-014	NGC	2679	2679/	
+05-29-074	NGC	4310	4310/	
+05-30-066	NGC	4656	4656/	
+05-30-105a	MCG	+05-30-105	+05-30-105a	
+05-37-014	MCG			Delete duplicate record
+05-37-015	MCG			Delete duplicate record
+05-41-001	MCG	+05-40-001	+05-41-001	
+05-41-002	MCG	+05-40-002	+05-41-002	
+05-41-003	MCG	+05-40-003	+05-41-003	
+05-41-004	MCG	+05-40-004	+05-41-004	
+05-41-005	MCG	+05-40-005	+05-41-005	
+05-41-006	MCG	+05-40-006	+05-41-006	
+05-41-007	MCG	+05-40-007	+05-41-007	
+05-41-008	MCG	+05-40-008	+05-41-008	
+05-41-009	MCG	+05-40-009	+05-41-009	
+05-41-010	MCG	+05-40-010	+05-41-010	
+05-41-011	MCG	+05-40-011	+05-41-011	
+05-41-012	MCG	+05-40-012	+05-41-012	
+05-41-013	MCG	+05-40-013	+05-41-013	
+05-41-014	MCG	+05-40-014	+05-41-014	
+05-41-015	MCG	+05-40-015	+05-41-015	
+05-42-003	MCG	+05-40-003	+05-42-003	
+05-53-004	NGC	7303	7303/	

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Table 3. (continued)

MCG	Datum	For	Read	Remarks
+04-01-030	NGC	8 9	8/	
+04-02-005	NGC	8283	82/	
+04-02-008	NGC	85a	85b	
+04-02-035	NGC	169A	169b	
+04-06-003 to -062				Add 60 missing records
+04-10-012				Delete duplicate record
+04-24-026	NGC	3189	3189/	
+04-28-057	MCG	+04-08-057	+04-28-057	
+04-38-005	NGC	6027	6027b	
+04-38-006	NGC	6027	6027a	
+04-38-007	NGC	6027	6027c	
+04-38-008	NGC	6027	6027A	
+04-38-009	NGC	6027	6027d	
+04-38-010	NGC	6027	6027e	
+04-44-003	NGC	6660	6660/	
+04-54-005	NGC	7436	7436a	
+04-54-006	NGC	7436	7436b	
+03-25-008	NGC	2933	2933/	
+03-32-016	NGC	4322	4322/	
+03-45-035	NGC	6467	6467/	
+03-46-012	NGC	6548	6548/	
+03-59-024	IC	7578	7578a	
+03-59-025	IC	7578	7578b	
+02-24-010	NGC	2874	2874/	
+02-33-014	IC	815	815a	
+02-33-015	IC	815	815b	
+02-34-018	NGC	5174	5174/	
+02-59-013	NGC	7559	7559a	
+02-59-014	NGC	7559	7559b	
+02-59-022	NGC	7594=	7594	
+01-28-010	NGC	3386	3386/	
+01-31-046	IC	3131	3131/	
+01-32-038	NGC	4342	4342/	
+01-32-043	IC	3265	3265/	
+01-33-024	NGC	4795	4795/	
+01-36-033	NGC	5535	5535/	
+01-39-014a	a	0515.1	1515.1	
+01-58-007				Delete duplicate record
+01-59-051a	MCG	+01-59-51A	+01-59-051a	
+00-03-001	MCG	+01-03-001	+00-03-001	
+00-03-003	MCG	-00-03-003	+03-03-003	
+00-04-142	NGC	547	547a	
+00-04-143	NGC	547	547b	
+00-25-032	NGC	3047	3047b	
+00-25-033	NGC	3047	3047a	

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Table 3. (concluded)

MCG	Datum	For	Read	Remarks
+00-32-019	NGC	R80		Delete Reir.muth number
+00-60-058	NGC	7783	7783a	
+00-60-059	NGC	7783	7783b	
+00-60-060	NGC	7783	7783c	
-01-01-047	MCG	- 1-01-047	-01-01-047	
-01-01-062	NGC	61	61a	
-01-01-063	NGC	61	61b	
-01-03-002	IC	1575*	1575a*	
-01-03-003	IC	1575*	1575b*	
-01-05-041	MCG	+01-05-041	-01-05-041	
-01-07-002	NGC	8945	894/	
-01-50-002	I <sub>d</sub>		1	Record from Addenda, Part II
	I <sub>D</sub>		3	Remaining data previously present
	i		1	
-01-58-014	IC	5278	5278:*	Number in IC
-01-60-004	NGC	7694	7694/	
-02-03-063	NGC	341	341a	
-02-03-064	NGC	341	341b	
-02-007-004	F	-1200	-12 00	Alignment
-02-12-011	IC	369*	370*	
-02-12-031	IC	376	376/	
-02-28-013	NGC	3421	3421/	
-02-32-003	NGC	4279	4279/	
-03-05-003	MCG	-03-04-003	-03-05-003	
-03-05-009	MCG	-03-04-009	-03-05-009	
-03-08-048	NGC	1150	1150/	
-03-10-030				Add missing record
-03-26-028	NGC	3140	3140/	
-04-01-041	NGC	235	235a	
-04-01-042	NGC	235	235b	
-04-33-044				Delete duplicate record
-04-48-006	NGC	6907	6907/	

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SECTION 5 - SAMPLE LISTING

The sample listing given on the following pages contains logical data records exactly as they are recorded on the tape. Groups of records from the beginning and end of the catalogue are illustrated. The beginning of each record and bytes within the record are indicated by the column heading index across the top of each page (digits read vertically).

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LISTING OF RECORDS FROM TAPE P I J 3

TAPE FILE NAME: Morphol Cat Galaxies

RECORDS 1 TO 30

TAPE FILE 53

RECORD LENGTH 64 BYTES

INPUT VCISER ADC007

C O L U M N G  
 H E A D I N G  
 I N D E X  
 1111111122222222333333333344444444445555555566666666777777778888888899999999000000011111111  
 12345678901234567890123456789012345678901234567890123456789012345678901234567890123456789012345

RECORD	1	MCG+15-01-001	0003.	+88 04 16.	2.	0.5	16.	13.	352
RECORD	2	MCG+15-01-002	0455.	+88 19 15.	1.5	1.	10.	4.	252
RECORD	3	MCG+15-01-003	0544.	+87 42 16.	1.5	1.	6.5	3.	164
RECORD	4	MCG+15-01-004	0619.	+87 35 16.	1.		8.	1.	5454
RECORD	5	MCG+15-01-005a*	0635.	+87 22 17.	0.3		5.	3.	551
RECORD	6	MCG+15-01-005b*	0635.	+87 22 18.			1.		43
RECORD	7	MCG+15-01-006	0658.5	+8 52 17.	2.	1.	13.	4.	562
RECORD	8	MCG+15-01-007	0734.	+88 16 17.	0.5		6.	2.	5162
RECORD	9	MCG+15-01-008	0917.	+89 15 16.	4.	1.5	8.	3.	263
RECORD	10	MCG+15-01-009	0933.5	+88 23 15.	0.5	0.3	20.	17.	361
RECORD	11	MCG+15-01-010	1130.	+89 22 16.	2.5	2.	11.	10.	461
RECORD	12	MCG+15-01-011	3172	+89 22 15.	3.		10.	6.	5251
RECORD	13	MCG+15-01-012	1157.	+88 25 15.	4.5	2.5	6.	3.	153
RECORD	14	MCG+15-01-013	1250.	+88 04 16.	0.5		7.	7.	153
RECORD	15	MCG+15-01-014	1255.5	+87 35 17.	3.	1.5			365
RECORD	16	MCG+15-01-015	1432.5	+87 23 17.	0.5		4.	2.	5162
RECORD	17	MCG+15-01-016	1544.	+87 23 17.	0.5	0.3	4.	2.	143
RECORD	18	MCG+15-01-017	1624.	+87 57 17.	1.6	1.3			1
RECORD	19	MCG+15-01-018	1806.	+88 19 16.	2.5	2.	4.5	2.	363
RECORD	20	MCG+15-01-019	1810.	+87 40 16.	2.5	2.	5.	3.	162
RECORD	21	MCG+15-01-020	1819.5	+87 44 17.	2.	1.5			1
RECORD	22	MCG+15-01-021	1832.5	+87 48 16.			13.	1.	5465
RECORD	23	MCG+15-01-022	1929.	+88 30 17.	1.5	1.	5.	2.	5562
RECORD	24	MCG+15-01-023	1933.	+88 37 16.	1.		6.		461
RECORD	25	MCG+15-01-024	1952.5	+87 09 16.	1.3	0.5	6.		151
RECORD	26	MCG+15-01-025	2010.	+88 27 16.	2.5	2.	4.		46
RECORD	27	MCG+14-01-001	2251.	+82 39 14.	2.5	2.	24.	5.	343
RECORD	28	MCG+14-01-002	2306.	+86 30 17.	1.5		7.5	6.	5151
RECORD	29	MCG+14-01-003	2307.	+86 29 16.	1.5		6.		151
RECORD	30	MCG+14-01-004 *	2351.	+85 46 17.			9.	0.	5335

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