

Compiling avionics software with a formally verified compiler

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The CompCert project

compcert.inria.fr

Goal: develop and prove correct a realistic compiler usable for critical embedded software

- from (a very large subset of) the C language
- to assembly code for popular processors (PowerPC, ARM, x86)
- producing reasonable efficient code ($\rightarrow$ some optimizations)

Used Coq to mechanize the proof of semantic preservation and also to implement most of the compiler.

(Executable via automatic extraction to Caml.)

Verifying a compiler

Using Coq, we prove the following semantic preservation property:

For all source programs S and compiler-generated code C ,
if the compiler generates machine code C from source S ,
without reporting a compilation error,
then « C behaves like S ».

- Compilers are allowed to fail (ill-formed source code, or capacity exceeded).
- Compiler written from scratch, along with its proof; not trying to prove an existing compiler.

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Reducing non-determinism during compilation

Languages such as C leave evaluation order partially unspecified.

```
int x = 0;
int f(void) { x = x + 1; return x; }
int g(void) { x = x - 1; return x; }
```

The expression $f() + g()$ can evaluate either to:

- 1 if $f()$ is evaluated first (returning 1), then $g()$ (returning 0);
- -1 if $g()$ is evaluated first (returning -1), then $f()$ (returning 0).

Every C compiler chooses one evaluation order at compile-time.

The compiled code therefore has fewer behaviors than the source program (1 instead of 2).

Semantics preservation property

For all source programs S and compiler-generated code C ,
if the compiler generates machine code C from source S ,
without reporting a compilation error,
then the **observable behavior** of C is one of the possible **observable behaviors** of S according to the C semantics.

Semantics preservation property

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Behaviors = termination / divergence / undefined («going wrong»)
+ trace of I/O operations performed

Semantics preservation property

For all source programs S and compiler-generated code C ,
if the compiler generates machine code C from source S ,
without reporting a compilation error,
then the **observable behavior** of C is one of the possible **observable behaviors** of S according to the C semantics, or **improves** on one of these possible **behaviors**.

Behaviors = termination / divergence / undefined («going wrong»)
+ trace of I/O operations performed

Improving = replacing undefined behaviors by more defined behavior

Improving behaviors during compilation

```
#include <stdio.h>
int main()
{
    int x;
    printf("Crash!\n");
    x = 1 / 0;
    return 0;
}
```

Compilers routinely optimize away going-wrong behaviors.

This program **goes wrong**.

However, the compiler eliminates `x=1/0;` as it is dead code.

Thus, the generated code **terminates** with the same trace of observable events `out("Crash!\n")`.

Improving behaviors during compilation

This program **goes wrong**.

```
#include <stdio.h>
int main()
{
    int x[2] = { 12, 34 };
    printf("x[2] = %d\n", x[2]);
    return 0;
}
```

However, the code generated by the compiler does not check the array bounds.

The generated code may crash but in general it prints an arbitrary integer and terminates normally.

A consequence of the main CompCert theorem

We know that the source program does not go wrong

- e.g. because it was formally verified with a static analyzer.

If the source program can not go wrong, then the behavior of the generated assembly code is exactly one of the behaviors of the source program.

Theorem `transf_c_program_is_refinement`:
 $\text{forall } p \text{ tp, } \text{transf_c_program } p = \text{OK } \text{tp} \rightarrow$
 $(\text{forall } \text{behv}, \text{exec_C_program } p \text{ behv} \rightarrow \text{not_wrong } \text{behv}) \rightarrow$
 $(\text{forall } \text{behv}, \text{exec_Asm_program } \text{tp } \text{behv} \rightarrow \text{exec_C_program } p \text{ behv}).$

The generated assembly code can not wrong.

Compiling critical embedded software

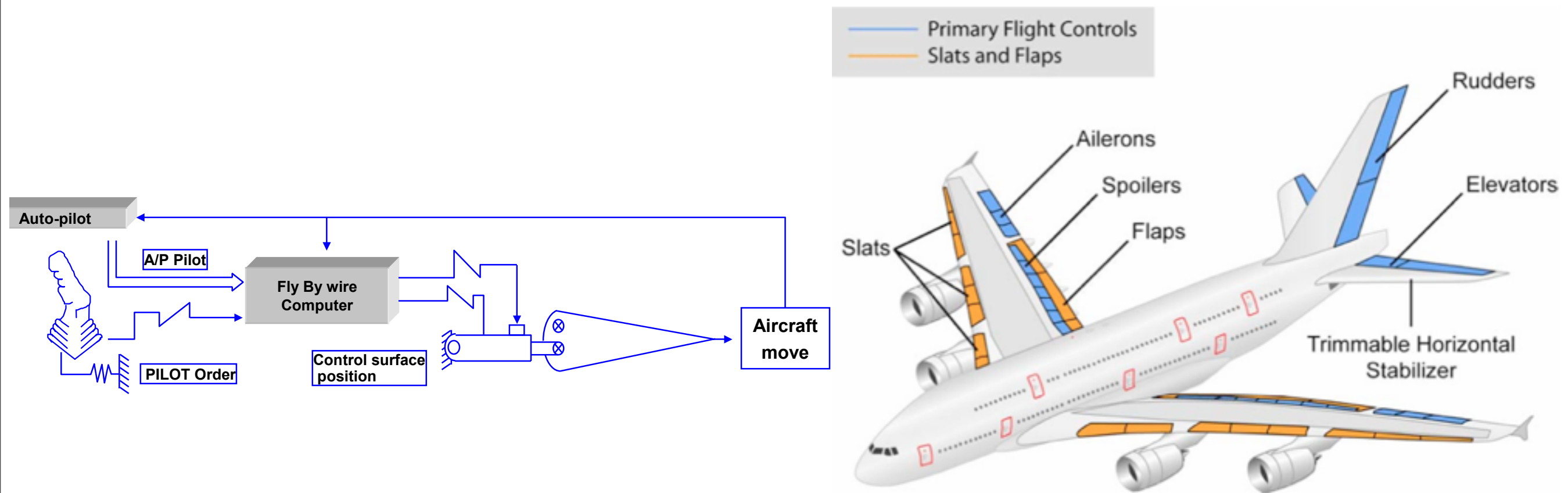




Execute pilot's commands

Flight assistance: keep aircraft within safe flight envelope

Fly-by-wire software



Mostly **control-command code** (Scade) + a minimalistic OS (C)

100k - 1M LOC code, but mostly generated from block diagrams (Simulink, Scade)

Fly-by-wire software



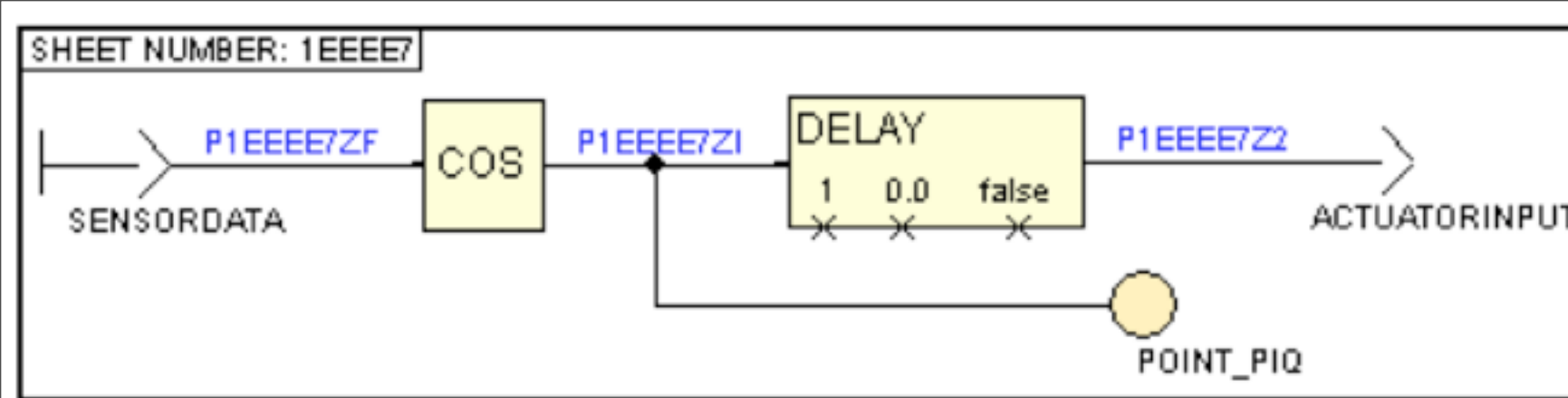
Rigorous validation: review (qualitative), analysis (quantitative), testing (huge amounts)

Conducted at multiple levels, from design to final product

Meticulous development process; extensive documentation

The qualification process (DO-178)

From block diagrams
to code



code
generator

```

/*Sheet Number: 1EEEE7*/

#include "other_includes.h"
#include "delay.mac"
#include "cos.mac"
#include "piq_x.mac"

m_START_NUM_INPUT_ZONE
m_INPUT(SENSORDATA, NUM)
m_END_NUM_INPUT_ZONE

m_START_NUM_OUTPUT_ZONE
m_OUTPUT(ACTUATORINPUT, NUM)
m_END_NUM_OUTPUT_ZONE

m_START_NUM_OBS_ZONE
m_OBS_NUM(POINT_PIQ)
m_END_NUM_OBS_ZONE

m_START_CST_INPUT_ZONE
m_CST(c_DELAY_P3_2_N1EEEE7, ENT, 1)
m_END_CST_INPUT_ZONE

m_START_STATIC_ARRAY_ZONE
m_STATIC_ARRAY(t_DELAY_2_N1EEEE7, 1, NUM)
m_END_STATIC_ARRAY_ZONE

m_START_SHEET(1E, EE, E7)

m_CONNECTION(P1EEEE7Z2_N1EEEE7, NUM)
m_CONNECTION(loc_c_DELAY_P3_2_N1EEEE7, ENT)
m_CONNECTION(P1EEEE7ZF_N1EEEE7, NUM)
m_CONNECTION(P1EEEE7ZI_N1EEEE7, NUM)

m_VtS(SENSORDATA, P1EEEE7ZF_N1EEEE7)
m_CtS(c_DELAY_P3_2_N1EEEE7, loc_c_DELAY_P3_2_N1EEEE7)

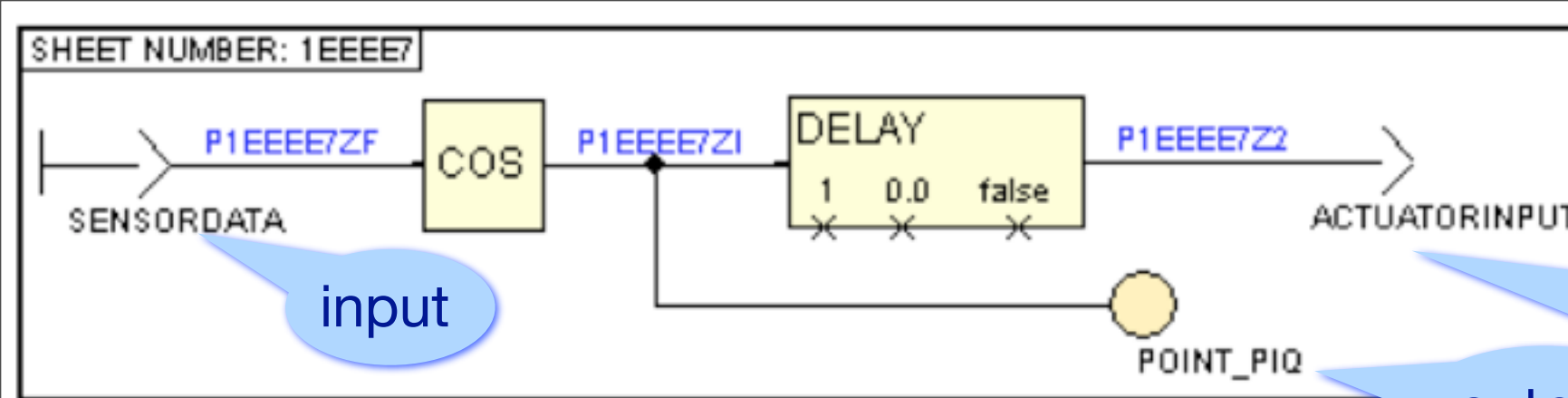
COS(0_N1EEEE7, P1EEEE7ZF_N1EEEE7, P1EEEE7ZI_N1EEEE7)
PIQ_X(1_N1EEEE7, P1EEEE7ZI_N1EEEE7, POINT_PIQ)
DELAY(2_N1EEEE7, P1EEEE7ZI_N1EEEE7, \
loc_c_DELAY_P3_2_N1EEEE7, P1EEEE7Z2_N1EEEE7, t_DELAY_2_N1EEEE7)

m_StV(P1EEEE7Z2_N1EEEE7, ACTUATORINPUT)
m_END_SHEET
  
```

compiler

```

Nm_1EEEE7:
; annotation: Symbol DELAY number 2_N1EEEE7 , \
inputs: f3, r31 and one static
100 addis    r12, 0, (_DELAY_2_N1EEEE7_R2)@ha
104 lwz     r4, (_DELAY_2_N1EEEE7_R2)@l(r12)
; annotation: Variable to search: loc_c_DELAY_P3_2_N1EEEE7
; annotation: DELAY; is entered with r4 = from 0 to
108 mr      r7, r4
10c addis    r12, 0, (t_DELAY_2_N1EEEE7)@ha
110 addi     r8, r12, (t_DELAY_2_N1EEEE7)@l
114 rlwinm   r10, r7, 3, 0, 28 ; 0xffffffff8
118 add      r10, r8, r10
11c lfd      f2, 0(r10)
; annotation: Variable to search: loc_c_DELAY_P3_2_N1EEEE7
; annotation: DELAY; is entered with r4 = from 0 to
120 mr      r8, r4
124 addis    r12, 0, (t_DELAY_2_N1EEEE7)@ha
128 addi     r6, r12, (t_DELAY_2_N1EEEE7)@l
12c rlwinm   r5, r8, 3, 0, 28 ; 0xffffffff8
130 add      r9, r6, r5
134 stfd     f3, 0(r9)
138 addi     r4, r4, 1
13c cmpw     cr0, r4, r31
140 bt       0, .L101
144 addi     r4, 0, 0
.L101:
148 addis    r12, 0, (_DELAY_2_N1EEEE7_R2)@ha
14c stw     r4, (_DELAY_2_N1EEEE7_R2)@l(r12)
; annotation: End of DELAY number 2_N1EEEE7 , output: f2
  
```



From block diagrams
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m_START_NUM_OBS_ZONE
m_OBS_NUM(POINT_PIQ)
m_END_NUM_OBS_ZONE

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m_CST(c_DELAY_P3_2_N1EEEE7, ENT, 1)
m_END_CST_INPUT_ZONE

m_START_STATIC_ARRAY_ZONE
m_STATIC_ARRAY(t_DELAY_2_N1EEEE7, 1, NUM)
m_END_STATIC_ARRAY_ZONE

m_START_SHEET(1E, EE, E7)

m_CONNECTION(P1EEEE7Z2_N1EEEE7, NUM)
m_CONNECTION(loc_c_DELAY_P3_2_N1EEEE7, ENT)
m_CONNECTION(P1EEEE7ZF_N1EEEE7, NUM)
m_CONNECTION(P1EEEE7ZI_N1EEEE7, NUM)

m_VtS(SENSORDATA, P1EEEE7ZF_N1EEEE7)
m_CtS(c_DELAY_P3_2_N1EEEE7, loc_c_DELAY_P3_2_N1EEEE7)

COS(0_N1EEEE7, P1EEEE7ZF_N1EEEE7, P1EEEE7ZI_N1EEEE7)
PIQ_X(1_N1EEEE7, P1EEEE7ZI_N1EEEE7, POINT_PIQ)
DELAY(2_N1EEEE7, P1EEEE7ZI_N1EEEE7, \
loc_c_DELAY_P3_2_N1EEEE7, P1EEEE7Z2_N1EEEE7, t_DELAY_2_N1EEEE7)

m_StV(P1EEEE7Z2_N1EEEE7, ACTUATORINPUT)
m_END_SHEET

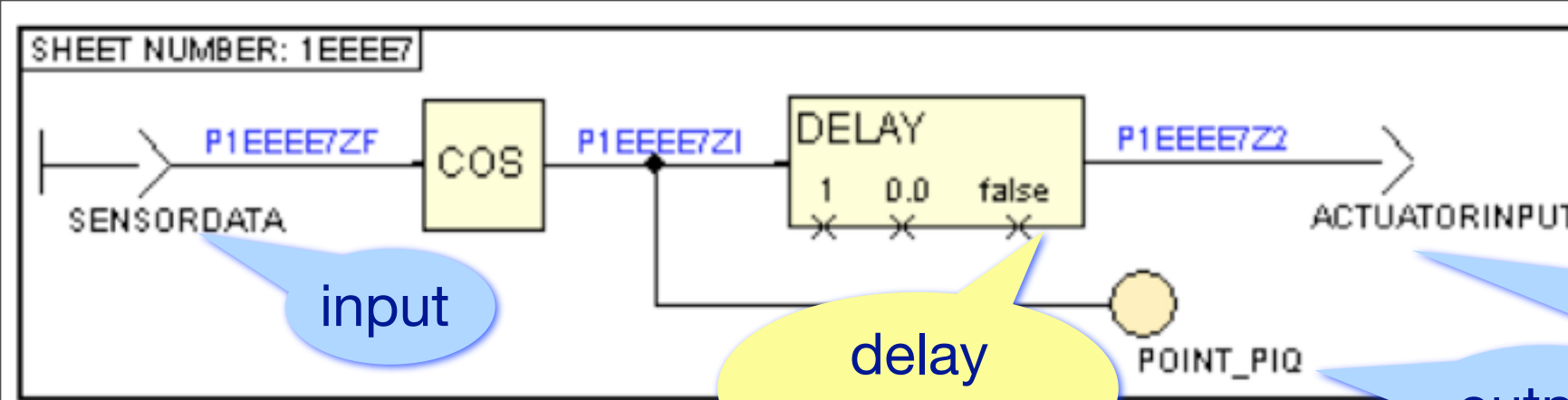
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compiler

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Nm_1EEEE7:
; annotation: Symbol DELAY number 2_N1EEEE7 , \
inputs: f3, r31 and one static
100 addis    r12, 0, (_DELAY_2_N1EEEE7_R2)@ha
104 lwz      r4, (_DELAY_2_N1EEEE7_R2)@l(r12)
; annotation: Variable to search: loc_c_DELAY_P3_2_N1EEEE7
; annotation: DELAY; is entered with r4 = from 0 to
108 mr      r7, r4
10c addis    r12, 0, (t_DELAY_2_N1EEEE7)@ha
110 addi     r8, r12, (t_DELAY_2_N1EEEE7)@l
114 rlwinm    r10, r7, 3, 0, 28 ; 0xffffffff8
118 add      r10, r8, r10
11c lfd      f2, 0(r10)
; annotation: Variable to search: loc_c_DELAY_P3_2_N1EEEE7
; annotation: DELAY; is entered with r4 = from 0 to
120 mr      r8, r4
124 addis    r12, 0, (t_DELAY_2_N1EEEE7)@ha
128 addi     r6, r12, (t_DELAY_2_N1EEEE7)@l
12c rlwinm    r5, r8, 3, 0, 28 ; 0xffffffff8
130 add      r9, r6, r5
134 stfd     f3, 0(r9)
138 addi     r4, r4, 1
13c cmpw     cr0, r4, r31
140 bt       0, .L101
144 addi     r4, 0, 0
.L101:
148 addis    r12, 0, (_DELAY_2_N1EEEE7_R2)@ha
14c stw      r4, (_DELAY_2_N1EEEE7_R2)@l(r12)
; annotation: End of DELAY number 2_N1EEEE7 , output: f2

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m_START_NUM_OBS_ZONE
m_OBS_NUM(POINT_PIQ)
m_END_NUM_OBS_ZONE

m_START_CST_INPUT_ZONE
m_CST(c_DELAY_P3_2_N1EEEE7, ENT, 1)
m_END_CST_INPUT_ZONE

m_START_STATIC_ARRAY_ZONE
m_STATIC_ARRAY(t_DELAY_2_N1EEEE7, 1, NUM)
m_END_STATIC_ARRAY_ZONE

m_START_SHEET(1E, EE, E7)

m_CONNECTION(P1EEEE7Z2_N1EEEE7, NUM)
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m_CONNECTION(P1EEEE7ZI_N1EEEE7, NUM)

m_VtS(SENSORDATA, P1EEEE7ZF_N1EEEE7)
m_CtS(c_DELAY_P3_2_N1EEEE7, loc_c_DELAY_P3_2_N1EEEE7)

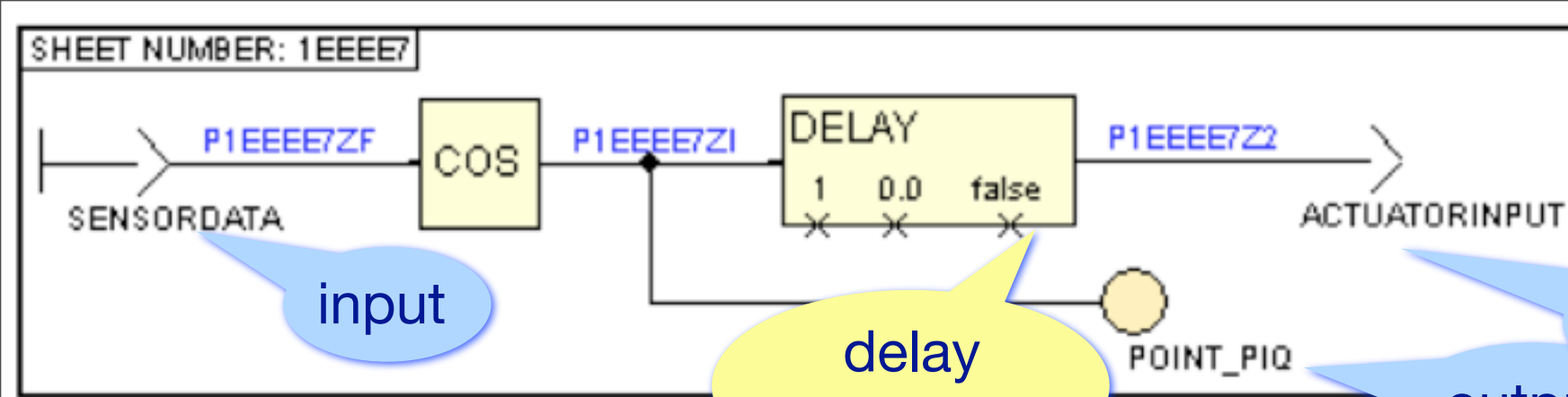
COS(0_N1EEEE7, P1EEEE7ZF_N1EEEE7, P1EEEE7ZI_N1EEEE7)
PIQ_X(1_N1EEEE7, P1EEEE7ZI_N1EEEE7, POINT_PIQ)
DELAY(2_N1EEEE7, P1EEEE7ZI_N1EEEE7, \
loc_c_DELAY_P3_2_N1EEEE7, P1EEEE7Z2_N1EEEE7, t_DELAY_2_N1EEEE7)

m_StV(P1EEEE7Z2_N1EEEE7, ACTUATORINPUT)
m_END_SHEET
  
```

compiler

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; annotation: Variable to search: loc_c_DELAY_P3_2_N1EEEE7
; annotation: DELAY; is entered with r4 = from 0 to
108 mr       r7, r4
10c addis    r12, 0, (t_DELAY_2_N1EEEE7)@ha
110 addi     r8, r12, (t_DELAY_2_N1EEEE7)@l
114 rlwinm    r10, r7, 3, 0, 28 ; 0xffffffff8
118 add      r10, r8, r10
11c lfd      f2, 0(r10)
; annotation: Variable to search: loc_c_DELAY_P3_2_N1EEEE7
; annotation: DELAY; is entered with r4 = from 0 to
120 mr       r8, r4
124 addis    r12, 0, (t_DELAY_2_N1EEEE7)@ha
128 addi     r6, r12, (t_DELAY_2_N1EEEE7)@l
12c rlwinm    r5, r8, 3, 0, 28 ; 0xffffffff8
130 add      r9, r6, r5
134 stfd     f3, 0(r9)
138 addi     r4, r4, 1
13c cmpw     cr0, r4, r31
140 bt       0, .L101
144 addi     r4, 0, 0
.L101:
148 addis    r12, 0, (_DELAY_2_N1EEEE7_R2)@ha
14c stw      r4, (_DELAY_2_N1EEEE7_R2)@l(r12)
; annotation: End of DELAY number 2_N1EEEE7 , output: f2
  
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From block diagrams
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code generator

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m_END_NUM_INPUT_ZONE

m_START_NUM_OUTPUT_ZONE
m_OUTPUT(ACTUATORINPUT, NUM)
m_END_NUM_OUTPUT_ZONE

m_START_NUM_OBS_ZONE
m_OBS_NUM(POINT_PIQ)
m_END_NUM_OBS_ZONE

m_START_CST_INPUT_ZONE
m_CST(c_DELAY_P3_2_N1EEEE7, ENT, 1)
m_END_CST_INPUT_ZONE

m_START_STATIC_ARRAY_ZONE
m_STATIC_ARRAY(t_DELAY_2_N1EEEE7, 1, NUM)
m_END_STATIC_ARRAY_ZONE

m_START_SHEET(1E, EE, E7)

m_CONNECTION(P1EEEE7Z2_N1EEEE7, NUM)
m_CONNECTION(loc_c_DELAY_P3_2_N1EEEE7, ENT)
m_CONNECTION(P1EEEE7ZF_N1EEEE7, NUM)
m_CONNECTION(P1EEEE7ZI_N1EEEE7, NUM)

m_VtS(SENSORDATA, P1EEEE7ZF_N1EEEE7)
m_CtS(c_DELAY_P3_2_N1EEEE7, loc_c_DELAY_P3_2_N1EEEE7)

COS(0_N1EEEE7, P1EEEE7ZF_N1EEEE7, P1EEEE7ZI_N1EEEE7)
PIQ_X(1_N1EEEE7, P1EEEE7ZI_N1EEEE7, POINT_PIQ)
DELAY(2_N1EEEE7, P1EEEE7ZI_N1EEEE7, \
loc_c_DELAY_P3_2_N1EEEE7, P1EEEE7Z2_N1EEEE7, t_DELAY_2_N1EEEE7)

m_StV(P1EEEE7Z2_N1EEEE7, ACTUATORINPUT)
m_END_SHEET
  
```

delay macro

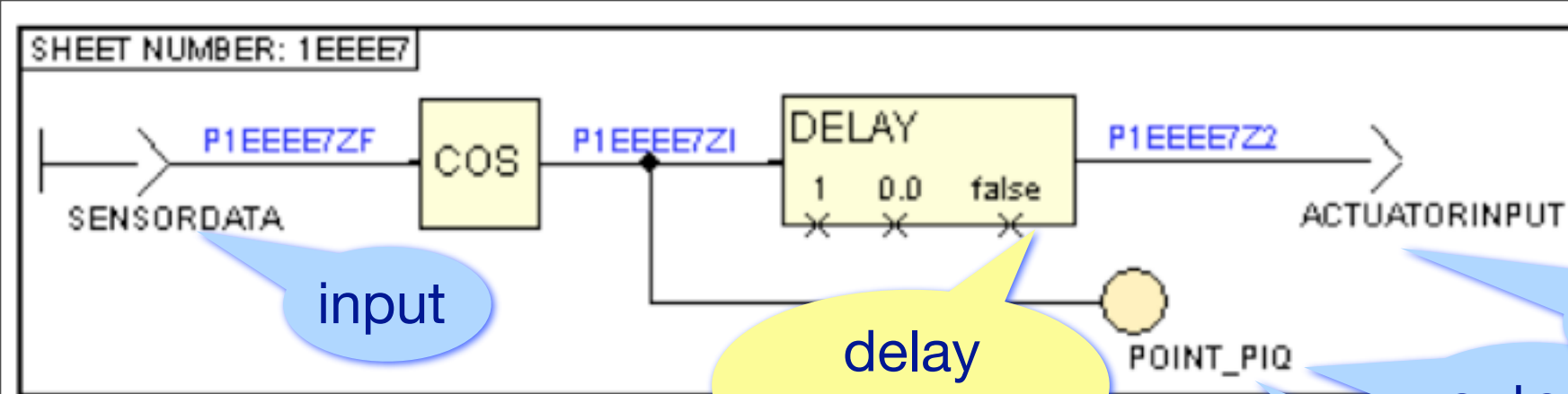
compiler

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Nm_1EEEE7:
; annotation: Symbol DELAY number 2_N1EEEE7 , \
inputs: f3, r31 and one static
100 addis    r12, 0, (_DELAY_2_N1EEEE7_R2)@ha
104 lwz     r4, (_DELAY_2_N1EEEE7_R2)@l(r12)
; annotation: Variable to search: loc_c_DELAY_P3_2_N1EEEE7
; annotation: DELAY; is entered with r4 = from 0 to
108 mr      r7, r4
10c addis    r12, 0, (t_DELAY_2_N1EEEE7)@ha
110 addi     r8, r12, (t_DELAY_2_N1EEEE7)@l
114 rlwinm   r10, r7, 3, 0, 28 ; 0xffffffff8
118 add     r10, r8, r10
11c lfd     f2, 0(r10)
; annotation: Variable to search: loc_c_DELAY_P3_2_N1EEEE7
; annotation: DELAY; is entered with r4 = from 0 to
120 mr      r8, r4
124 addis    r12, 0, (t_DELAY_2_N1EEEE7)@ha
128 addi     r6, r12, (t_DELAY_2_N1EEEE7)@l
12c rlwinm   r5, r8, 3, 0, 28 ; 0xffffffff8
130 add     r9, r6, r5
134 stfd    f3, 0(r9)
138 addi     r4, r4, 1
13c cmpw    cr0, r4, r31
140 bt      0, .L101
144 addi     r4, 0, 0
.L101:
148 addis    r12, 0, (_DELAY_2_N1EEEE7_R2)@ha
14c stw     r4, (_DELAY_2_N1EEEE7_R2)@l(r12)
; annotation: End of DELAY number 2_N1EEEE7 , output: f2
  
```

delay symbol

delay symbol



From block diagrams
to code

code generator

```

/*Sheet Number: 1EEEE7*/

#include "other_includes.h"
#include "delay.mac"
#include "cos.mac"
#include "piq_x.mac"

m_START_NUM_INPUT_ZONE
m_INPUT(SENSORDATA, NUM)
m_END_NUM_INPUT_ZONE

m_START_NUM_OUTPUT_ZONE
m_OUTPUT(ACTUATORINPUT, NUM)
m_END_NUM_OUTPUT_ZONE

m_START_NUM_OBS_ZONE
m_OBS_NUM(POINT_PIQ)
m_END_NUM_OBS_ZONE

m_START_CST_INPUT_ZONE
m_CST(c_DELAY_P3_2_N1EEEE7, ENT, 1)
m_END_CST_INPUT_ZONE

m_START_STATIC_ARRAY_ZONE
m_STATIC_ARRAY(t_DELAY_2_N1EEEE7, 1, NUM)
m_END_STATIC_ARRAY_ZONE

m_START_SHEET(1E, EE, E7)

m_CONNECTION(P1EEEE7Z2_N1EEEE7, NUM)
m_CONNECTION(loc_c_DELAY_P3_2_N1EEEE7, ENT)
m_CONNECTION(P1EEEE7ZF_N1EEEE7, NUM)
m_CONNECTION(P1EEEE7ZI_N1EEEE7, NUM)

m_VtS(SENSORDATA, P1EEEE7ZF_N1EEEE7)
m_CtS(c_DELAY_P3_2_N1EEEE7, loc_c_DELAY_P3_2_N1EEEE7)

COS(0_N1EEEE7, P1EEEE7ZF_N1EEEE7, P1EEEE7ZI_N1EEEE7)
PIQ_X(1_N1EEEE7, P1EEEE7ZI_N1EEEE7, POINT_PIQ)
DELAY(2_N1EEEE7, P1EEEE7ZI_N1EEEE7, \
loc_c_DELAY_P3_2_N1EEEE7, P1EEEE7Z2_N1EEEE7, t_DELAY_2_N1EEEE7)

m_StV(P1EEEE7Z2_N1EEEE7, ACTUATORINPUT)
m_END_SHEET

```

delay macro

variable stored in RAM

compiler

```

Nm_1EEEE7:
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100 addis    r12, 0, (_DELAY_2_N1EEEE7_R2)@ha
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110 addi     r8, r12, (t_DELAY_2_N1EEEE7)@l
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12c rlwinm   r5, r8, 3, 0, 28 ; 0xffffffff8
130 add      r9, r6, r5
134 stfd     f3, 0(r9)
138 addi     r4, r4, 1
13c cmpw     cr0, r4, r31
140 bt      0, .L101
144 addi     r4, 0, 0
.L101:
148 addis    r12, 0, (_DELAY_2_N1EEEE7_R2)@ha
14c stw     r4, (_DELAY_2_N1EEEE7_R2)@l(r12)
; annotation: End of DELAY number 2_N1EEEE7 , output: f2

```

delay symbol

delay symbol

Program annotations

A mechanism to attach annotations to program points

- Mark specific program points
- Provide information about the location of C variables.
- Ensure that some variables are preserved (e.g. x must be kept in a register).

Annotations are preserved during compilation.

- Each annotation generates an observable event.

```
_annot("Begin loop");  
...  
x = 1;  
_annot("Here x is in %1",x);  
...  
_annot("End loop");
```

compiler

```
; annotation: Begin loop  
...  
addi r3, 0, 1  
; annotation: Here x is in r3  
...  
; annotation: End loop
```

Conformance to the qualification process

A formally verified compiler gives traceability guarantees.

Simplified example

- The semantics preservation theorem ensures preservation of:
 - the sequencing of symbols,
 - the sequencing of accesses to hardware devices (volatile variables).

Remember the main theorem: If the source program can not go wrong, then the behavior of the generated assembly code is exactly one of the behaviors of the source program.

Theorem `transf_c_program_is_refinement`:

`forall p tp, transf_c_program p = OK tp →`

`(forall behv, exec_C_program p behv → not_wrong behv) →`

`(forall behv, exec_Asm_program tp behv → exec_C_program p behv).`

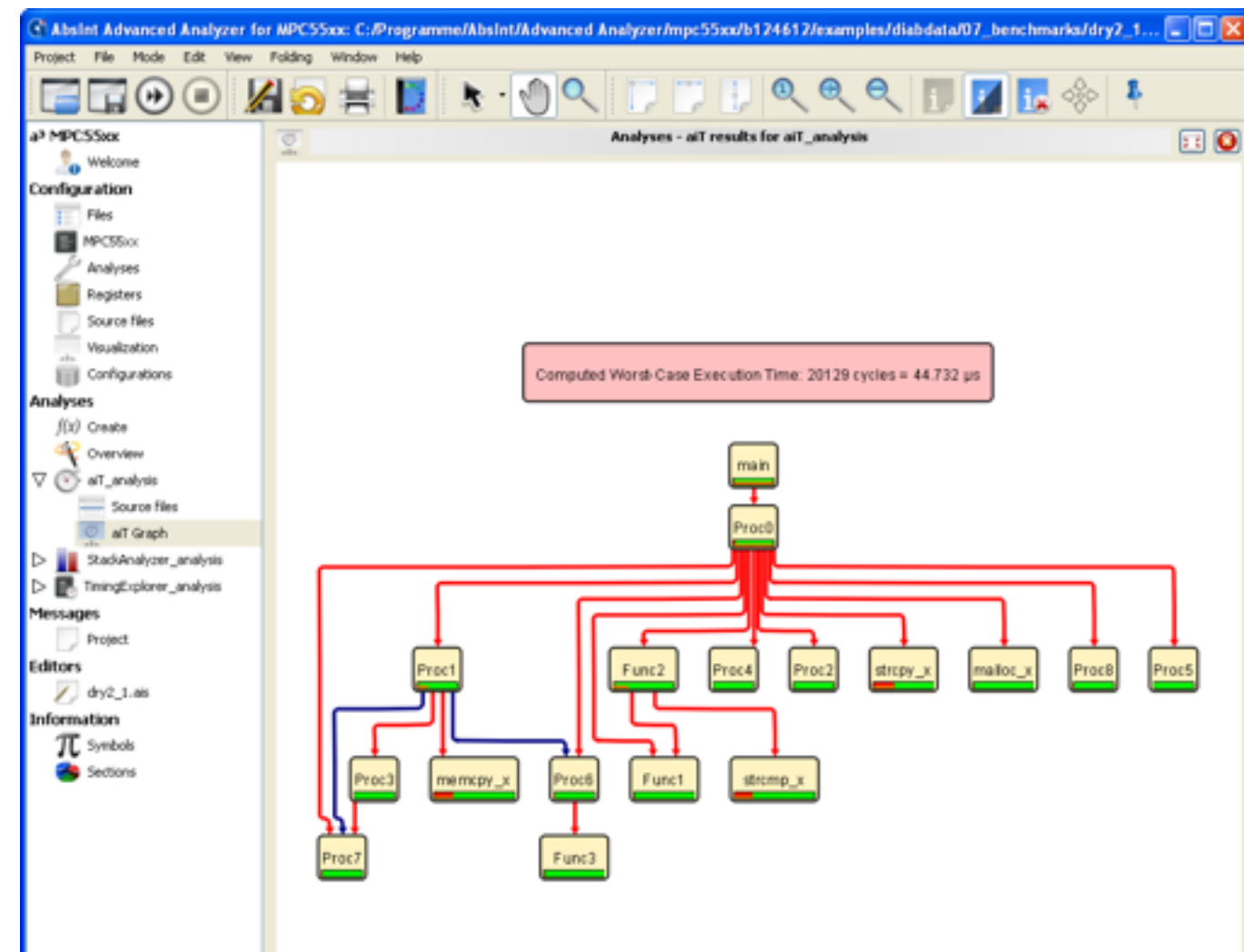
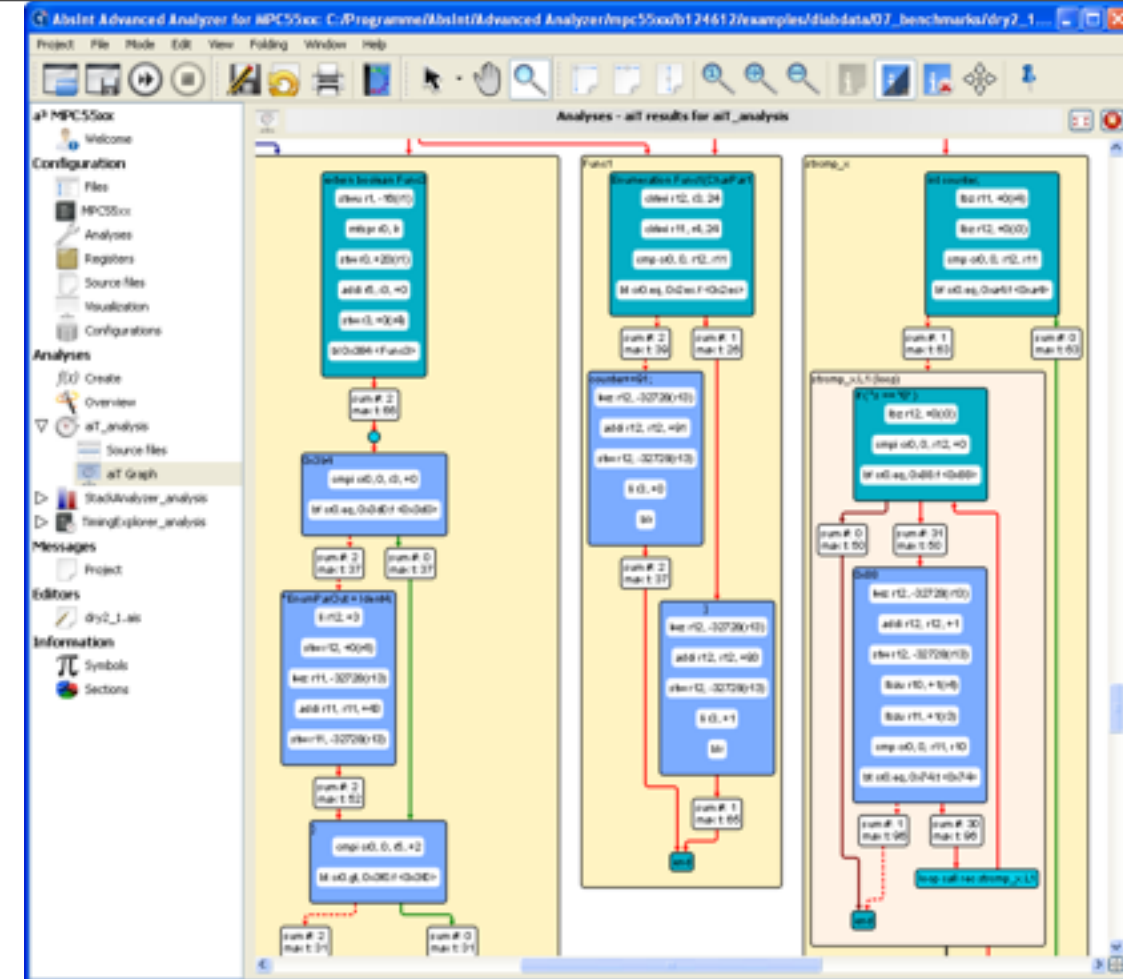
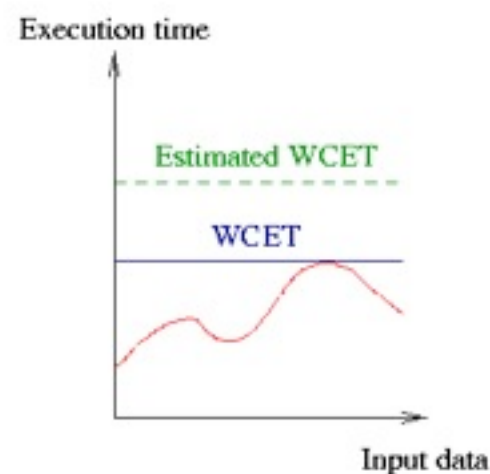
How good is the compiled code ?

Trade-off between

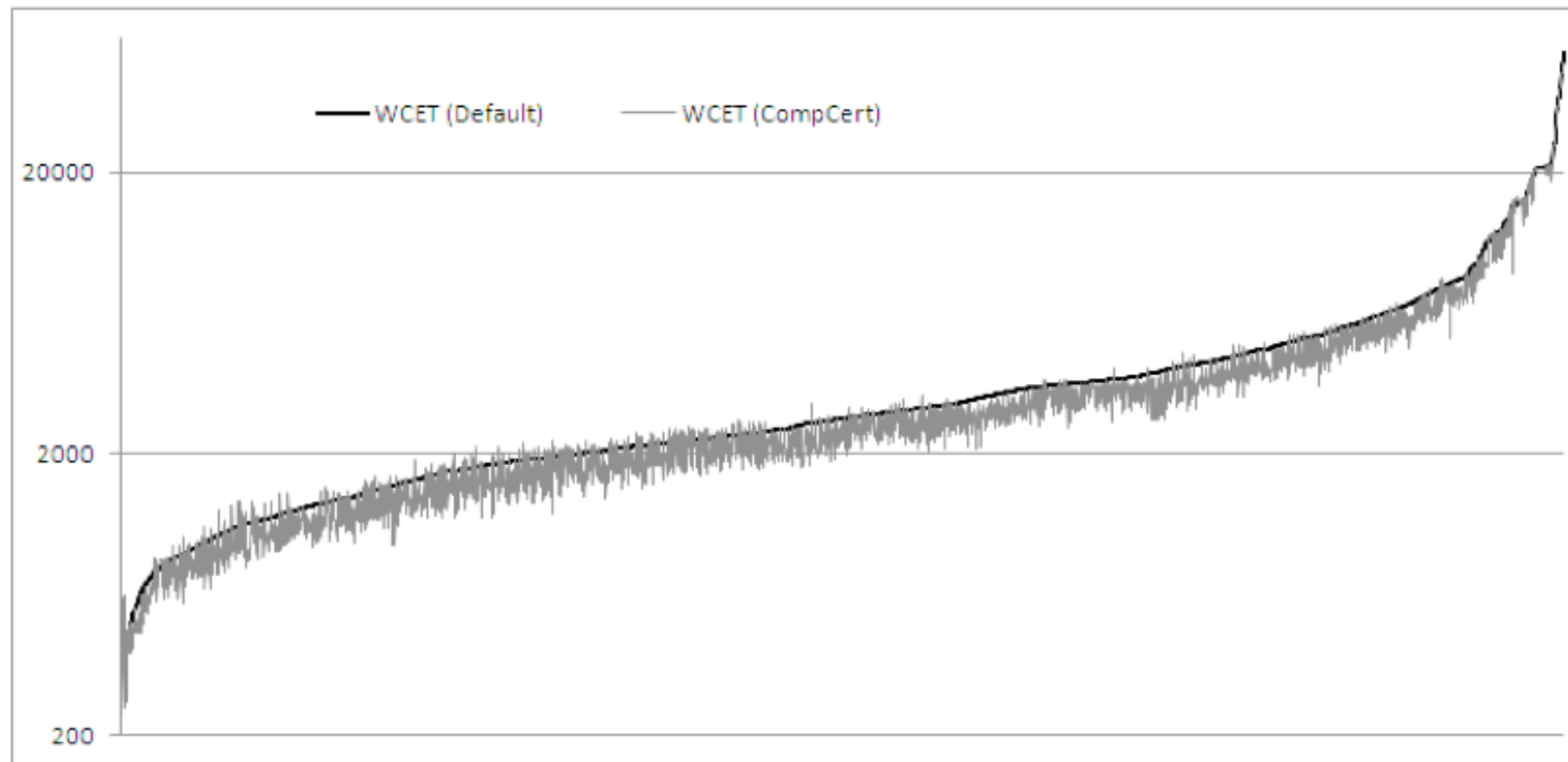
- traceability guarantees
- and efficiency of the generated code

Low-level verifications

- reviews of the assembly
- computation of a WCET estimation



WCET improvement



FCGU A380: 3600 files, 3.96 MB of assembly code

- Estimated WCET for each file
- Average improvement per file: 13,5%
- Compiled with CompCert 1.10, March 2012

Overall assessment

The improvement mainly comes from the register allocation pass.

- From: no register allocation
- To: sharing of local variables among available registers

Traceability guarantees

- From: tracking of all program variables
- To: tracking of meaningful variables (existing in block diagrams)

Concluding remarks

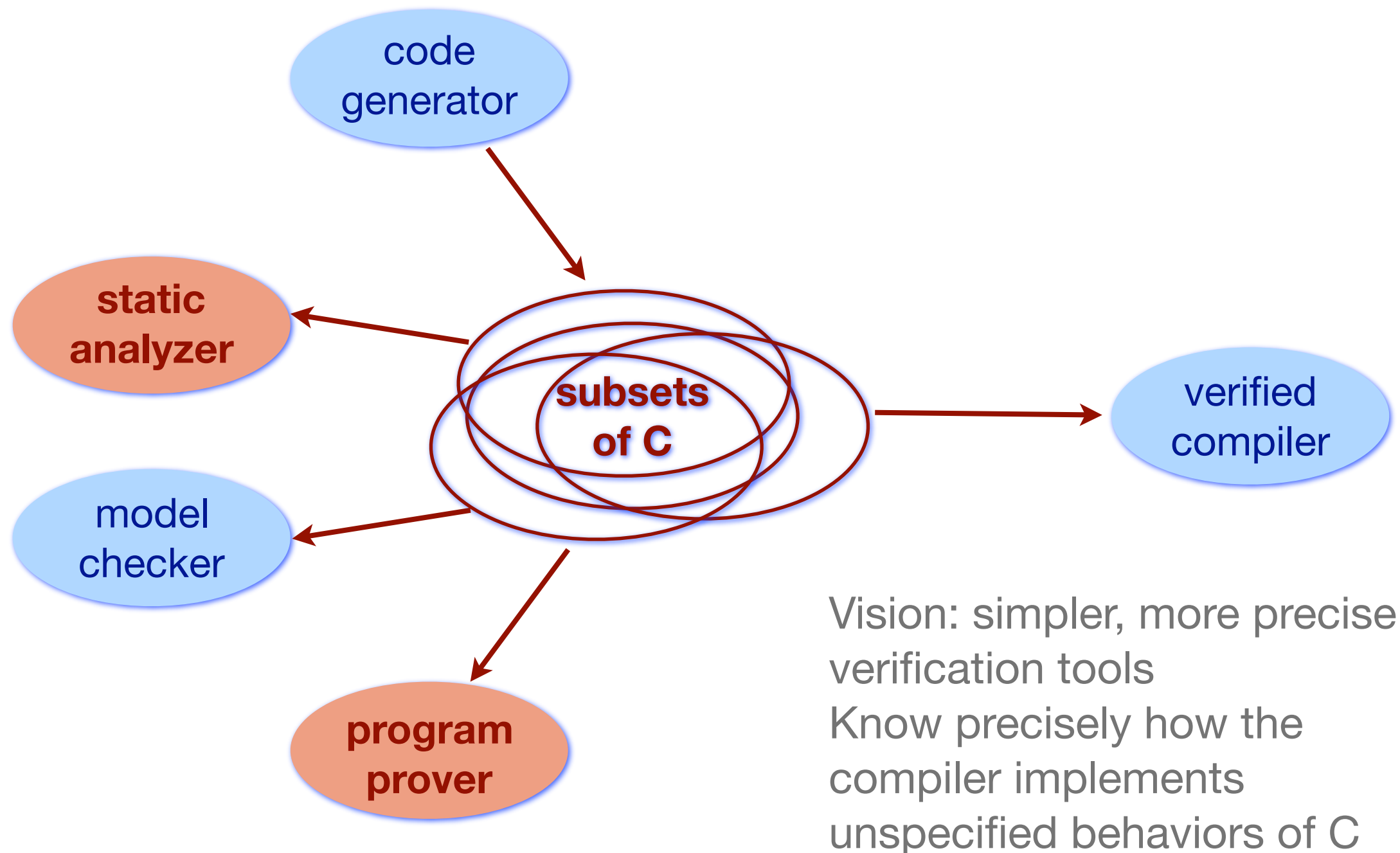
Reusable libraries



Concluding remarks

Connections with verification tools

Are these verification tools semantically sound ?



Concluding remarks

Higher assurance

Towards a qualification strategy for CompCert (DO-178C)

- How to qualify a C compiler ? a Coq formal development ?
- CompCert is specified by the semantics of its source and target languages (incl. supporting theories: machine integers, floats, I/O model and memory model), and by the semantics preservation theorem
 - Use of interpreters to test these semantics
 - Thanks to the proof, no need to talk about intermediate languages, compilation algorithms, optimizations and their supporting static analyses.
- Trust in Coq's extraction ? Trust in Caml ?