

Printed Output Issue With Windows XP

The various programs in *CompAero* and *TurbAero* use a common output module that lets the user view or print tabular or graphical output. That module performed flawlessly for Windows 3.1, 95, 98, ME and 2000. With the release of Windows XP, occasional problems have been encountered when printing the output files. No problems have been encountered in the more common practice of viewing them on the monitor screen. The problem is very unpredictable and apparently somewhat dependent on the printer in use. Early on it was discovered that simply changing the printer font size and then immediately changing it back (just so the code will recognize something was changed) just before printing would correct the problem (this can easily be done in the printed output window from the "Settings" menu). A fairly simple upgrade was incorporated which simulates that manual fix within the code. That upgrade appears to have resolved the problem on all of my PCs. But one report has been received of this problem occurring even after that upgrade was accomplished. The user should make note of the manual fix in case it is ever needed. Often the problem could be anticipated from the summary listed in the output window indicating a number of characters per line or a number of lines per page much greater than what was established during the printer setup.

There is also a useful alternative provided in the output window. The tabular output can be saved in a plain text file (typically with the file name extender .txt). This process removes the format codes used by the printed output module. These text files can be read directly by various document applications such as Microsoft *Word*, *WordPad*, *Notepad*, etc. Usually the default formatting used by those applications for plain text files is sufficient such that no conversion activity is required. The printed output is setup for a fixed pitch font (e.g., Courier or Courier New) with a font size and margins sufficient to permit at least eighty characters to be printed per line. Hence, the need to adjust margins, font or font size remains a possibility, although no case has been encountered so far where that was necessary. This capability was included as a convenient way to archive or transmit important output files electronically. But it also allows the use of the document application to print the tabular output files as an alternative should the user encounter the problem described in the previous paragraph.