

**INTERPRETATION IC 135-2008-4 OF  
ANSI/ASHRAE STANDARD 135-2008 BACnet® -  
A Data Communication Protocol for Building  
Automation and Control Networks**

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**Reference:** This request for interpretation refers to the requirements presented in ANSI/ASHRAE Standard 135-2008, Section 12.13.7, File Object Modification\_Date property value.

**Background:** BACnet allows devices to have no clock. This is implied by the requirements for the Device Object properties Local\_Date and Local\_Time, the data type of the Device Object's Last\_Restore\_Time being of type BACnetTimeStamp, in the Event\_Time\_Stamps properties of type BACnetTimeStamp of event reporting objects, and the Time Stamp parameter of event notification service requests.

In clause 12.13, File Object Type, there is no requirement that a device must have a clock in order to support File Objects.

The File Object's Modification\_Date property (clause 12.13.7) is a required property of type BACnetDateTime. In the definition of this property, there is no statement on what the value of this property shall be when the device has no clock.

BACnetDateTime is a sequence of primitive Date and Time values. Date and Time values may have all octets set to X'FF' to indicate "any" or "don't care", as defined in clauses 20.2.12 and 20.2.13.

In 135.1-2007, clause 9.13.1, Positive AtomicWriteFile Execution Tests, all tests are written under the assumption that a device has a clock. This appears to be a requirement which is not covered by 135-2008.

**Interpretation:** BACnet allows devices to have no clock. BACnet does not prohibit such devices to support File objects. For devices that have no clock, the Modification\_Date property of File Objects may contain X'FF' in all octets of Date and Time. This special value is the only option available to indicate "don't know", there is no clock.

**Question:** Is this interpretation correct?

**Answer:** No.

**Comments:** The standard is unclear on this matter. If the device does not contain the Local\_Date and Local\_Time properties, then the content of the Modification\_Date property is a local matter.