

# ATNF Operations

**Dave McConnell**  
**14 May 2009**

# ATNF Operations

- Staff changes
- Future ATNF Operations
- TAC: proposal for change
- Observatory developments

# Staff changes

- **Positions being filled**

- **Parkes Site Manager** (Brett Dawson resigning in March)
    - Thanks to Mal Smith for acting as Parkes Site Manager
  - **Head of Engineering Operations** (Brett Dawson resigning in March)
    - Thanks to Brett Hiscock for acting as Head of EO
  - **Assistant Director (National Facility Operations)**
    - Dave McConnell on 12 months leave from 24 July 2009
- All three positions closed 3 May; selections will be made this month.

# New staff

## Jamie Stevens



Senior System Scientist (ATCA)

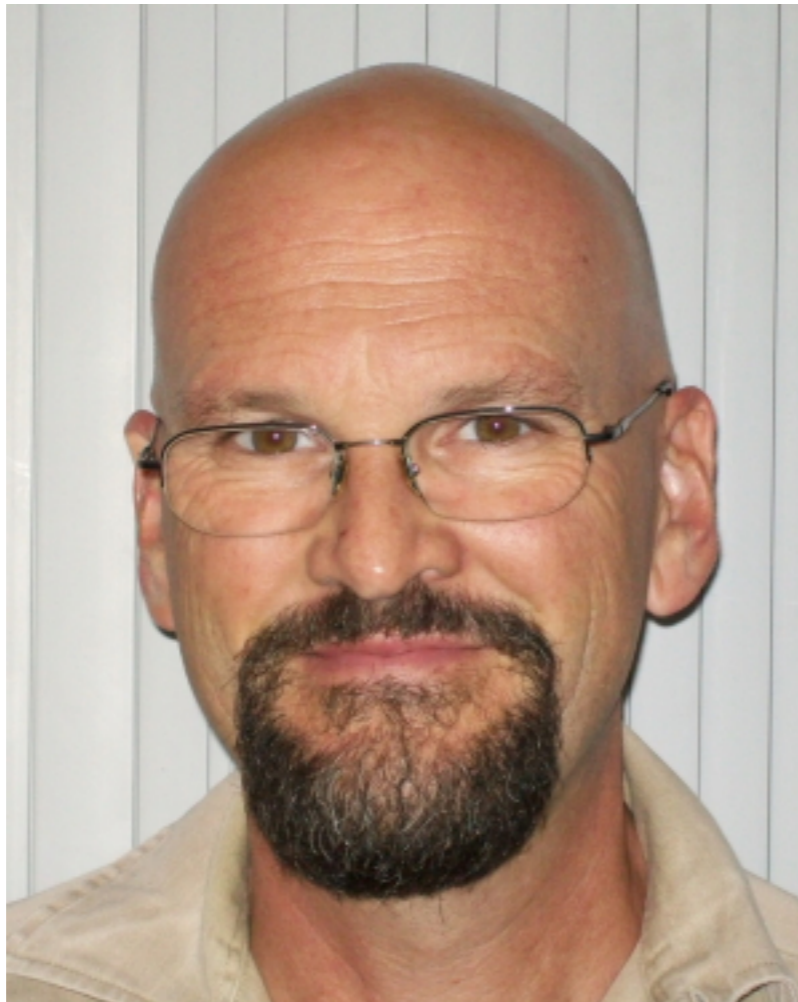
## Ettore Carretti



Senior System Scientist (Parkes)

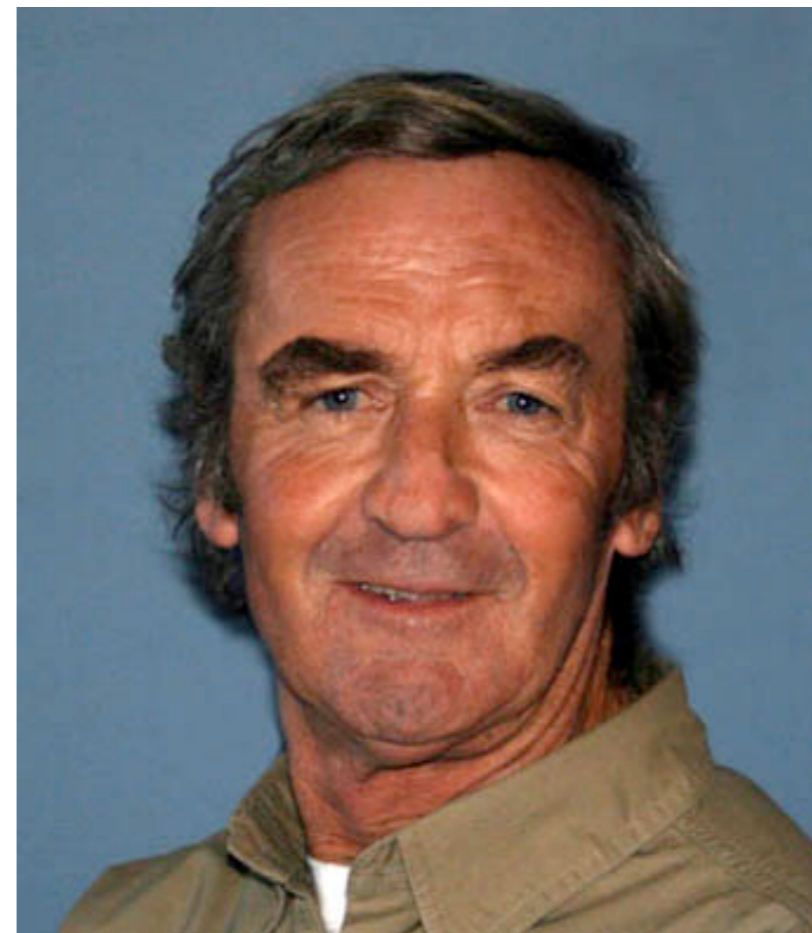
# New staff

## John Bateman



Electronics Technician (ATCA)

## Alan Laing



Electronics Technician (Parkes)

# New staff

## Daniel Craig



Computer support (Parkes)

## Sam Barry



Acting Head, Visitor Services  
(Marsfield)  
for Vicki Drazenovic on maternity leave

# New staff

## Matt McFarland



Electrician (Parkes)

# Future ATNF Operations

- Aim to be prepared for operating ASKAP in addition to Parkes, ATCA, Mopra and the LBA
  - Minimise the need for additional operational funding
  - Ensure that the capabilities of all telescopes is maintained and that the performance remains internationally competitive
- To achieve this the ATNF proposed to:
  - Restructure Operations into Science Operations & Engineering Operations
  - Establish Science Operations Centre (SOC) at central location (initially Marsfield)
    - Marsfield-Observatory trial collaboration link
  - Streamline scheduling and observing modes
    - Telescope scheduling (Phil Edwards' talk)
    - Parkes automation
    - Parkes receiver fleet reform



# Marsfield-Observatory collaboration link

- **Goal: To gain experience relevant to the design of future Observing Centres**
  - To provide means for effective “telecollaboration” between observer and support scientist.
  - To make use of existing technology, with only minor hardware and software construction.
  
- **Proposal: To establish a fixed link between Marsfield and one of the telescope control rooms (ATCA, Mopra or Parkes)**
  - Make use of shared computer display space using VNC (or equivalent) and matched display hardware at each end.
  - Provide a video and full-duplex audio link, dedicated and normally open.

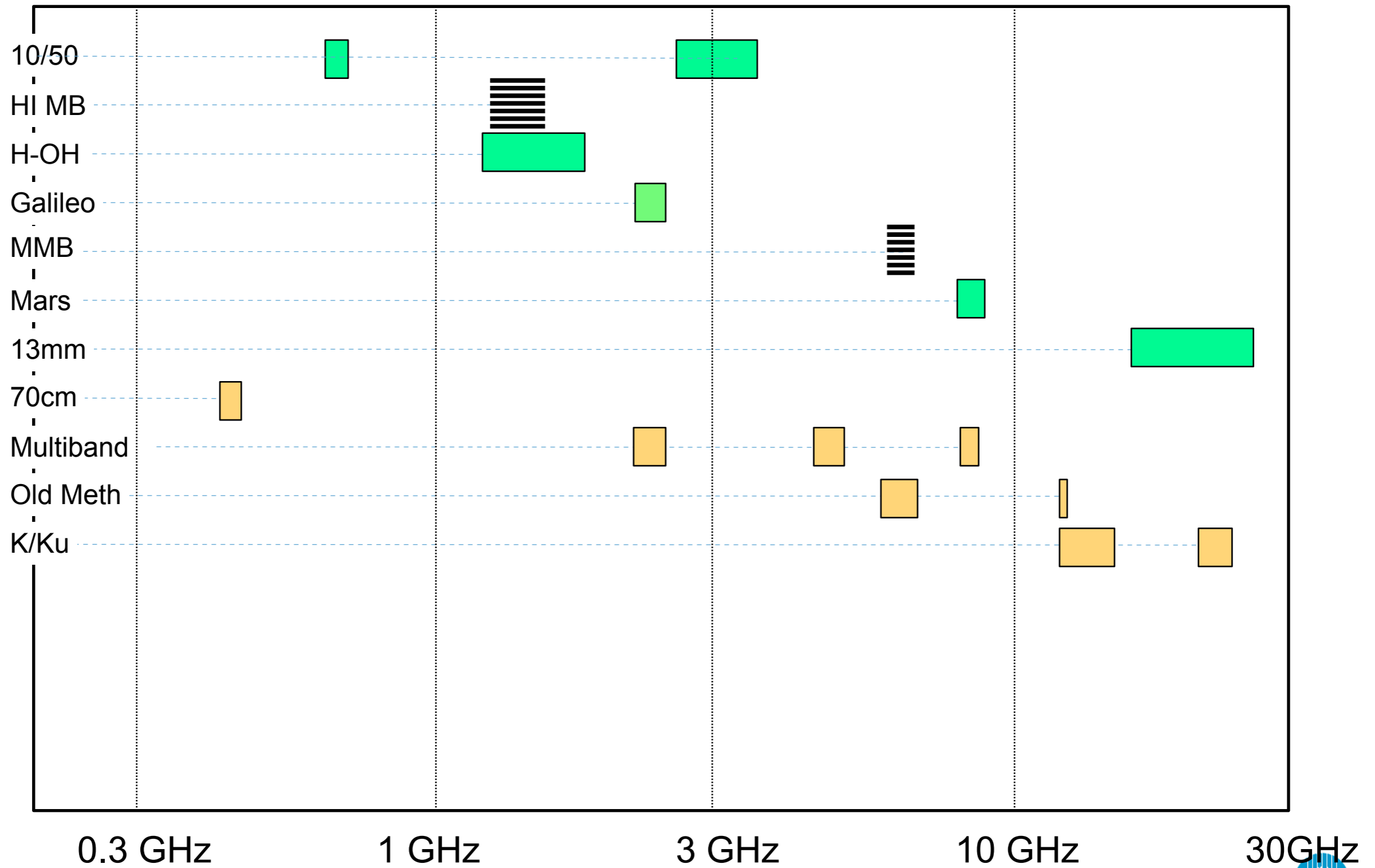
# Parke's "automation"

- Aims to decrease the amount of manual configuration and monitoring of equipment during and between observing sessions
  - Manual Control Panel gets more computer control
  - Increased monitoring and control of focus cabin equipment
  - Improved computer-controlled rf switching for signal path configuration
- These measures, necessary for any future model including remote observations, will make current modes of operation more efficient and reliable.

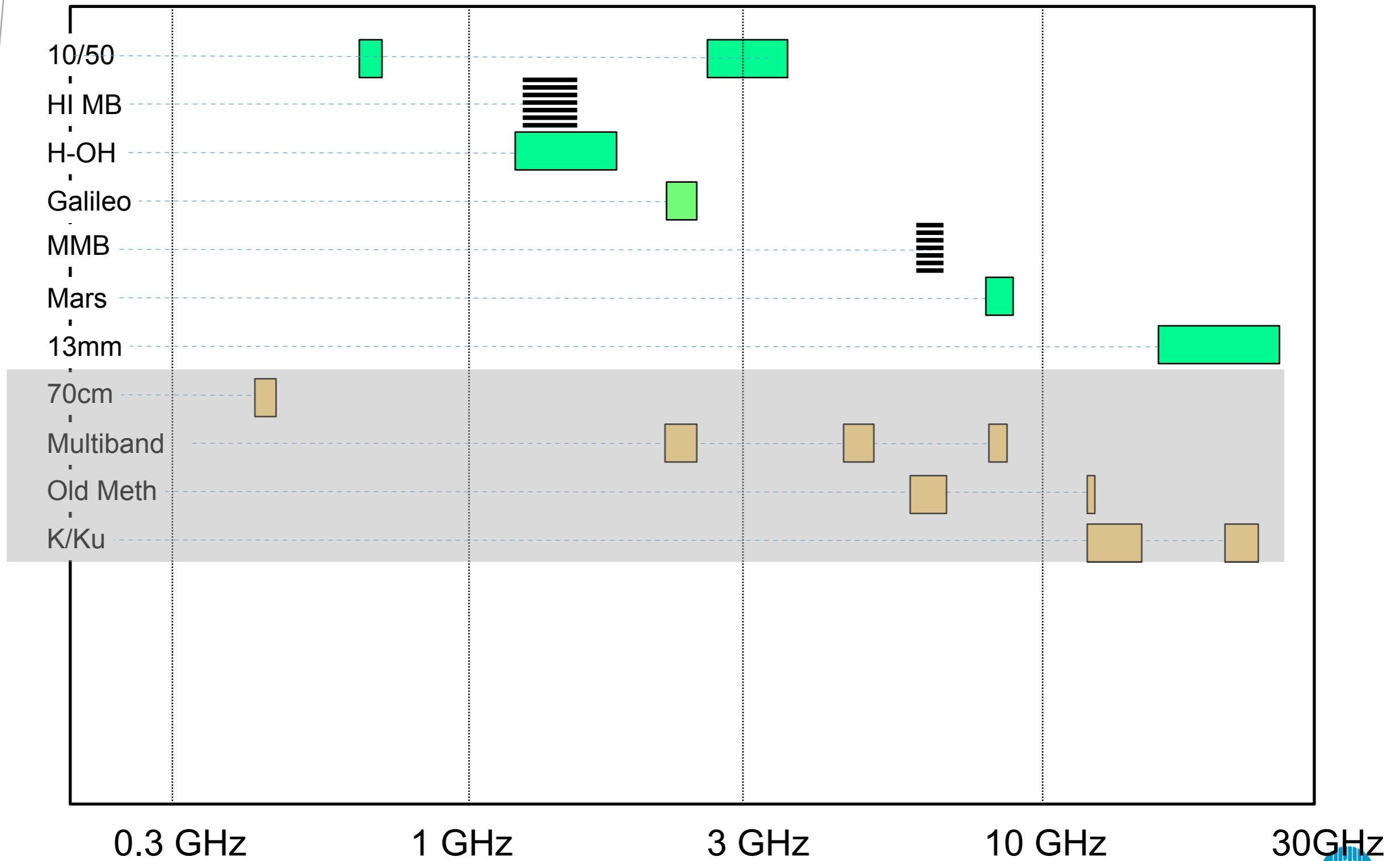
# Parkes receiver fleet

- In assessing the receivers at Parkes we have looked at:
  - usage: how much demand there is for each, and their patterns of use
  - age, maintainability and ease of operation
- The following receivers were identified for decommissioning:
  - AT Multiband (not all bands used, old control/monitor electronics)
  - Old methanol receiver - “Old Meth” (12.2GHz band not working; old control/monitor electronics)
  - K/Ku rx (K band replaced by 13mm rx, 12.2 GHz gets little use, no 12.2 GHz capacity on other AT antennas)
  - 70cm (minimal use years ago; might be replaced in the future by the Landecker 300-900 MHz receiver)

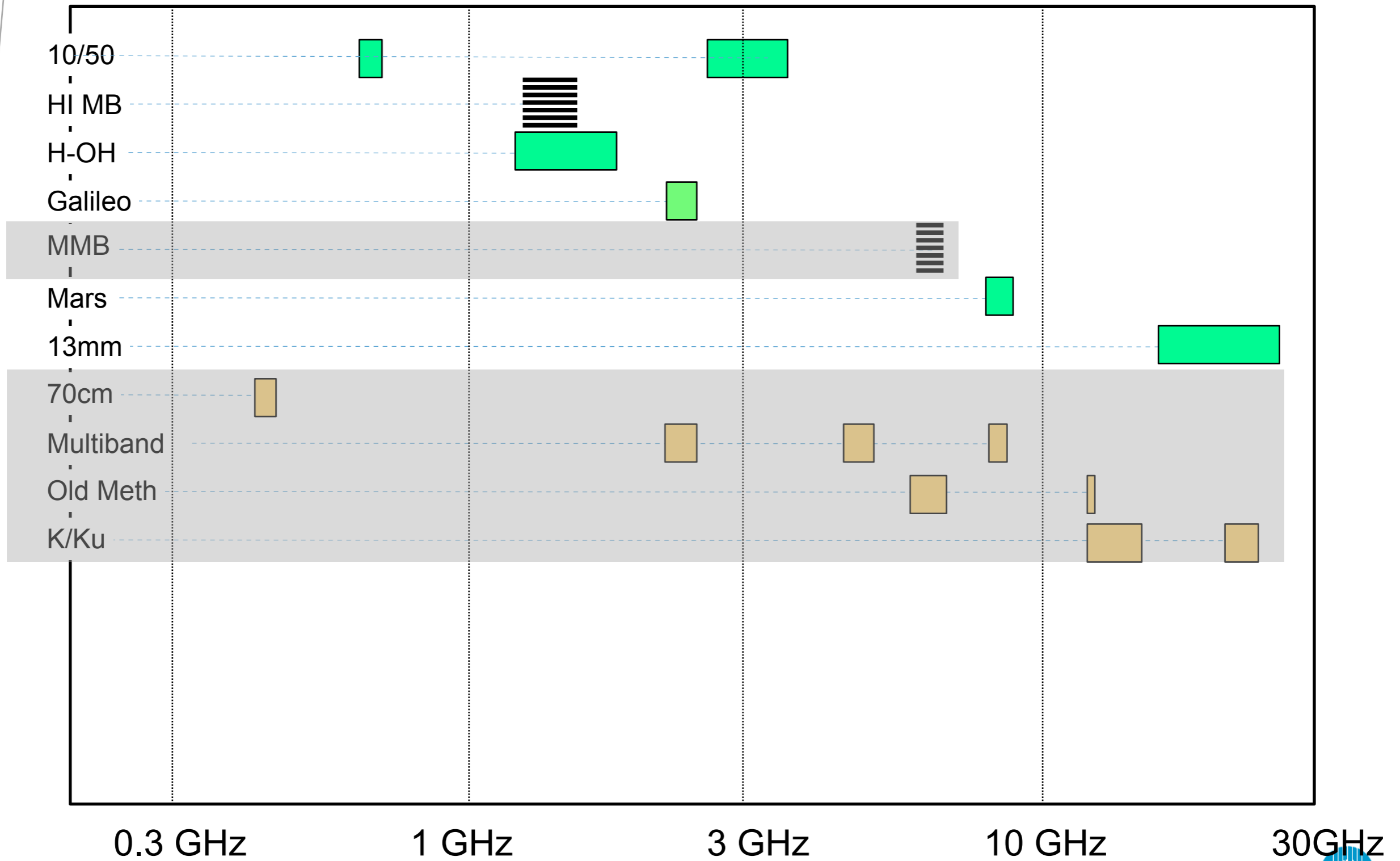
# Parkes receiver fleet



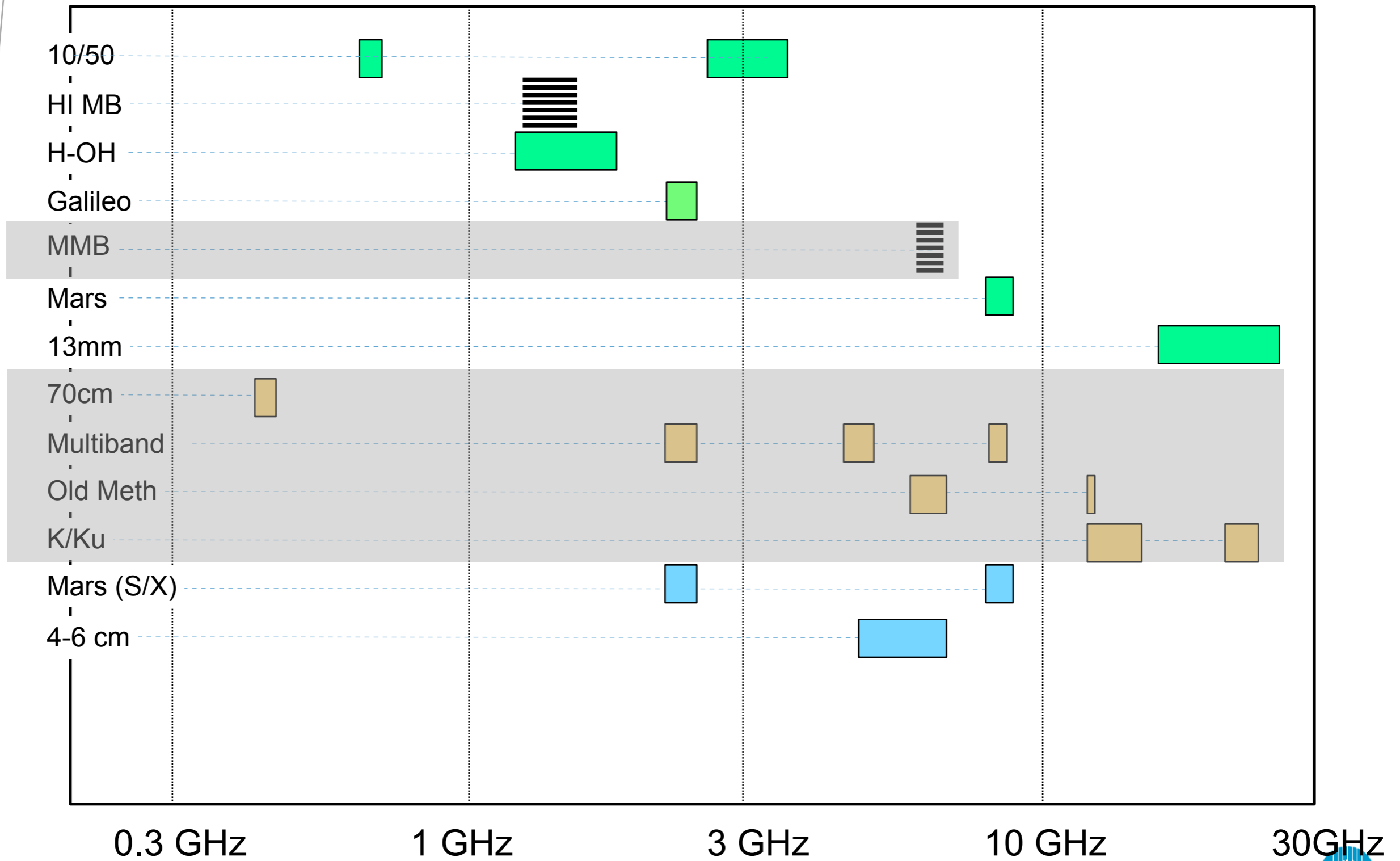
# Parkes receiver fleet



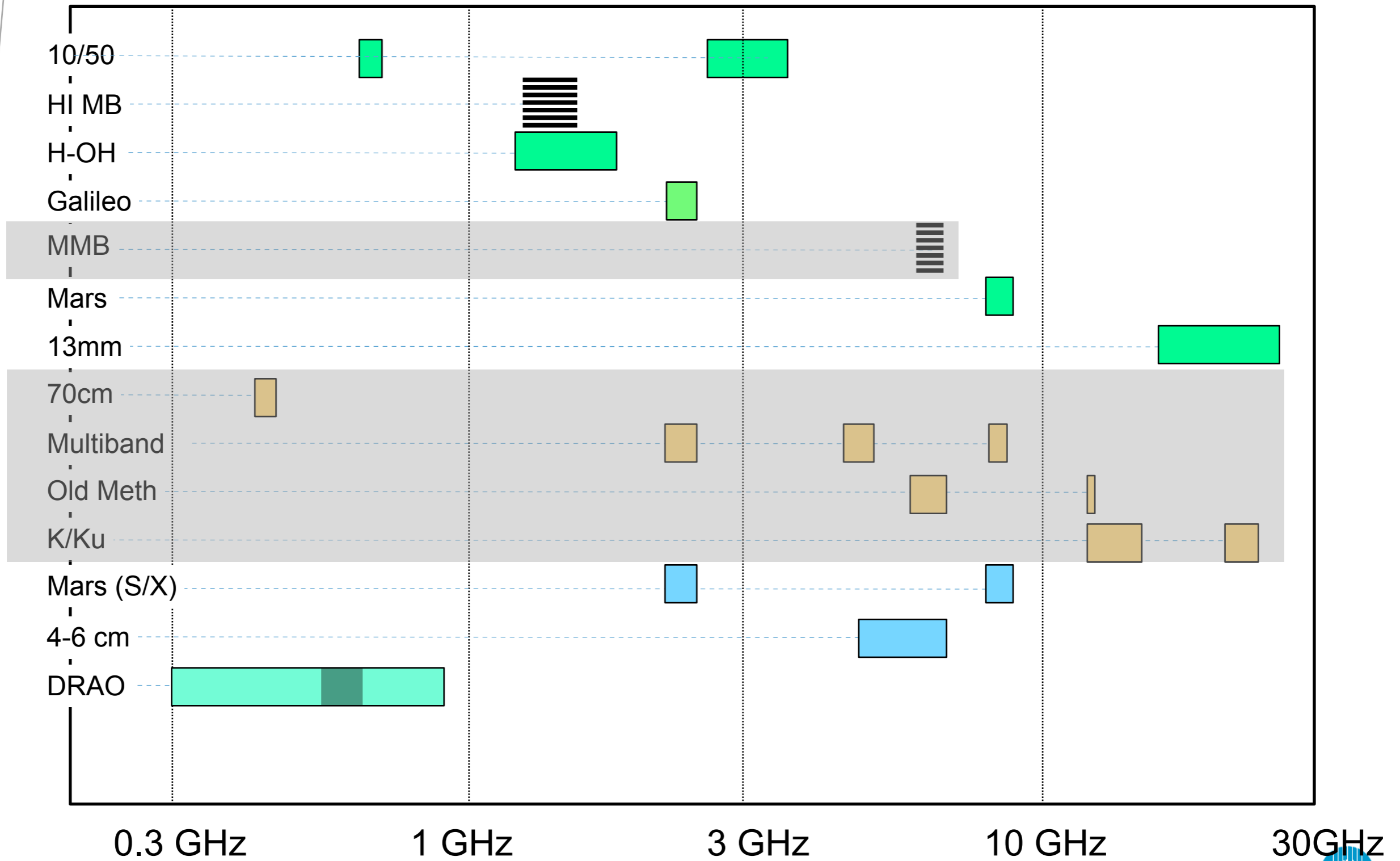
# Parkes receiver fleet



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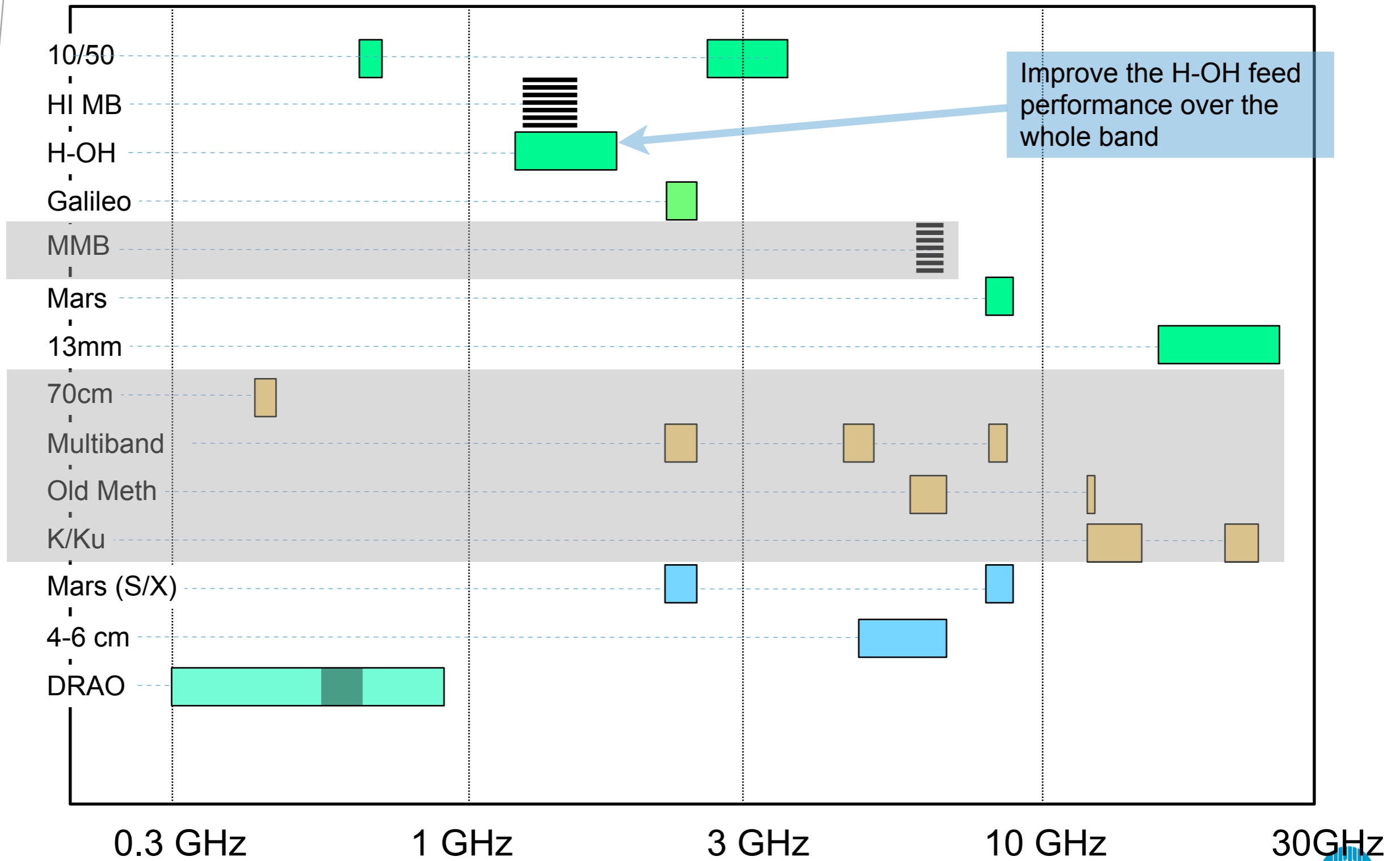


# Parkes receiver fleet



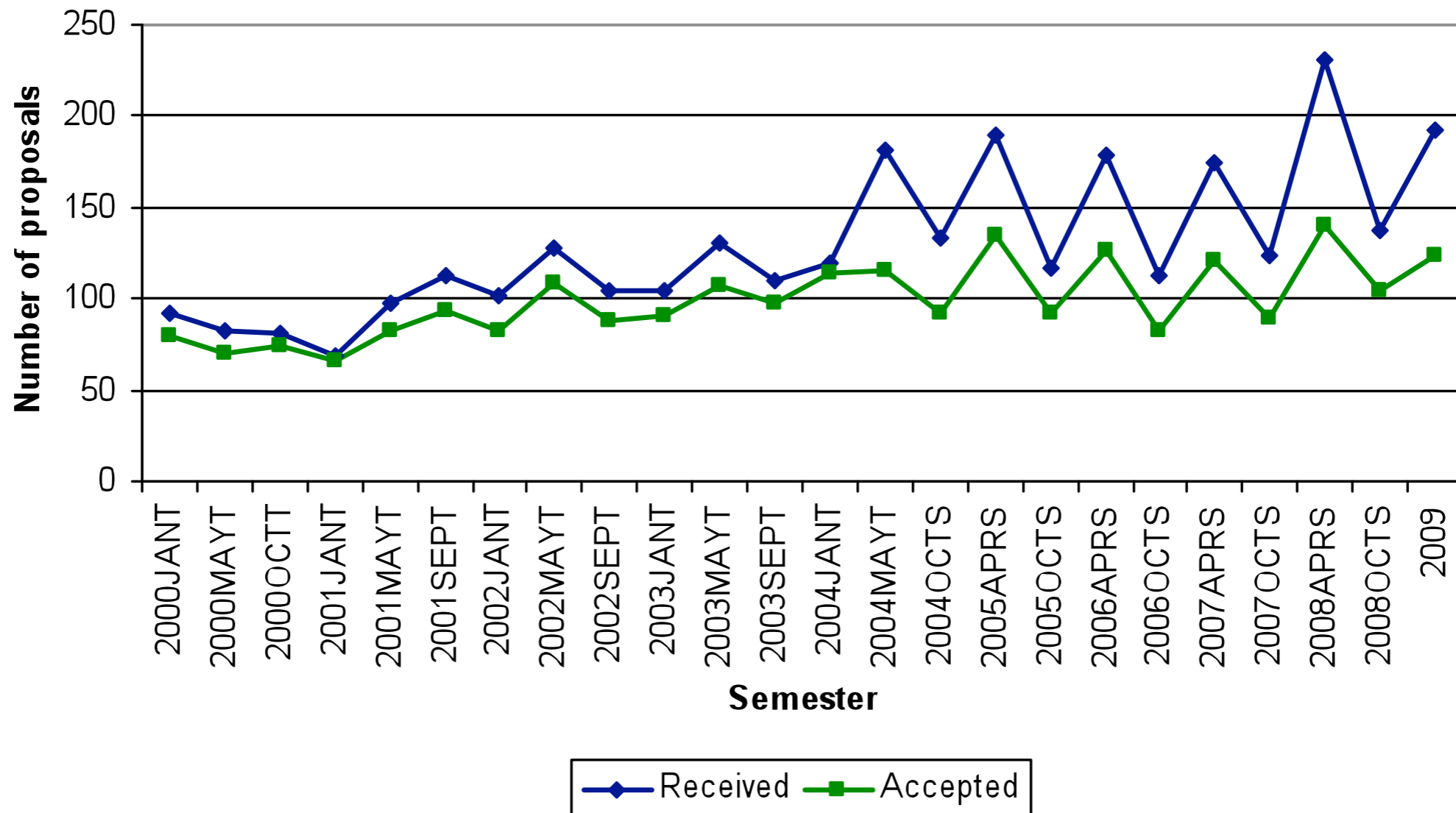


# Parkes receiver fleet



# TAC: Proposal to introduce readers

The TAC committee has 8 members.  
Each person reviews ~ 80 – 100 proposals semester.



# TAC: Changes - goals

- Reduce the load on TAC members to a maximum of ~ 25 proposals per semester
- Increase the range of scientific expertise and the number of reviewers available for the assessment of proposals.
- Involve overseas users in the TAC process
- Establish processes that can later include ASKAP Guest Proposals

# TAC: Proposal outline (document provided to ATUC )

- TAC continues to have 8 members who attend TAC meetings.
- Members are appointed by the Steering Committee.
- An additional ~ 20 TAC 'readers' appointed by ATNF Director.
- Each proposal is assigned to at least one TAC member and two readers. Proposal assignments use science keywords.
- TAC members and readers send comments and grades before TAC meeting is held.
- TAC member assigned to a proposal is responsible for the final comment that goes to proposers.
- ATNF provides TAC administration and new administration tools in OPAL

# Observatory news

- ATCA lodge rooms are getting independent split A/C units; southern rooms already fitted, northern rooms to follow
- Robin Wark, Scott Munting, David B all have defibrillator and oxy-viva training (advanced resuscitation training - ATCA and Mopra observers should feel safer!).
- Aeropelican - service to Narrabri is up and running (post Qantas era!).
- Scroll cryogenic compressors at Mopra have replaced the older CTI units. These will be more reliable, handle power fluctuations better, and have greater capacity.
- Mopra control room has its own independent UPS. A new UPS unit for the vertex room & ACC is currently on order.
- Parkes electronics lab refurbishment.
- Carpet in Parkes Quarters meeting room (this month)
- Parkes township landuse