

# Australia Telescope Users Committee

Director's reply to the Report to the Director on the meeting held at the Australia Telescope National Facility, Epping NSW on Friday 14 March, 1997

The AT Users Committee meeting commenced at 1315 and ended at 1600.

Members present were Dr A Green (chair), Dr L Allen, B Gaensler, Dr C Heisler, Dr S Johnston, Dr K Jones, Dr P Jones, Dr N Killeen, Dr J Reynolds (secretary), Dr E Sadler, Dr M Wieringa and Dr A Wright.

## Matters arising from previous comments by Director.

i) Synthesis imaging workshop, but with widened scope and title. Raymond Haynes has carried out a survey on ATNF training workshops that would be preferred by the Australian community. The response to his Questionnaire was not great, but clearly indicated a preference for a Compact Array synthesis workshop.

Narrabri Observatory OIC Dave McConnell has agreed to host a workshop at Narrabri. However, because of the recent staff turnover there, it will not be held this year, but probably during September next year. The September common vacation period appears to be the most suitable time for the workshop; other commitments occur close to or within other common periods. ATUC may wish to comment on preferred time.

## Business matters

1. Continuation of Mm-wave observing at Mopra. ATNF will continue to provide 3-mm observing facilities at Mopra, despite the limited interest in 3-mm observing so far. Receiver tuning can now be carried out from the Mopra Control Room via a PC program. A new observing program based on the Parkes multibeam program is currently being tested and should replace SPECTRA during 1998. The solid reflecting surface will be extended to 22-m diameter during March-April 1998, which means that the 3-mm system, which normally would have been reinstalled on the antenna during these months, will not be formally scheduled during the first term.
2. Additional Compact Array EW stations and NS Spur. Extra EW stations and NS Spur are both funded, and will be added during 1998
3. Provision of extra resources for multibeam data pipeline. The problem has been reduced in two ways. Firstly, extra computing power has been provided. Secondly, the processing system has been modified to enable the use of two processors simultaneously - output spectra are fed alternately to these processors.
4. Adequate computing facilities at the Observatories. The observatories should now have adequate facilities. Additional facilities have been added at Parkes and Mopra, and at Narrabri Kaputar serves several terminals.
5. Problems with locally generated interference, particularly at Parkes. The serious nature of the interference is recognised, and attempts are being made to identify and eliminate interference sources. A consequence of the short time-resolution of pulsar equipment is that substantial interference is being experienced during pulsar observations. For multibeam observations, efforts are underway to develop an interference excision technique based on the assumption that interference will occur in all beams. For the Compact Array, it has not been possible

to remove the interference 'birdies' at 128-MHz intervals.

6. Declined level of support from  
Epping computer services group.

The inadequacy of support is still present, and the matter will be taken up more actively by the Computer Management Committee which looks after all the computing at Marsfield. The HELPDESK system has been somewhat streamlined in that Henrietta May now monitors it daily and responds to ATNF problems. She and the rest of the ATNF group are generally available for assistance during working hours.

J. B. Whiteoak  
Acting Director ATNF  
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