#### ATNF ATUC MEMORANDUM

To: ATUC

From: Jessica Chapman

**Date:** 2 June 2004

Subject TAC Statistics and Outreach

### **TAC Statistics**

As previously requested by ATUC, TAC statistics are provided on the ATNF website at the address

# http://www.atnf.csiro.au/observers/tacstats.

The statistics shown on this page include all of the TAC-related statistics shown at the 2004 Steering Committee meeting. These are also published (with other performance indicators) in the 2003 Annual Report. The web page also shows some additional TAC-related statistics for 2004.

The 2004 MAYT currently underway is a transition term of five months (May – September) before the full change to 6-month semester that will begin in 2004 October. For the 2004 MAYT, the ATNF received an exceptionally large number of proposals with 122 proposals for the Compact Array, 35 for Parkes, 18 for Mopra, 4 for VLBI and three for service observing with the Tidbinbilla 70-m antenna. The unprecedented number of proposals received for the ATCA reflected a very strong user interest in the 3 and 12-millimetre systems (see plots C1 – C3). Approximately 45% of the total time requested was for 3 and 12-mm observing.

The oversubscription rate at the ATCA for 2004 MAYT was ~3:1, approximately 50% higher than usual. As a consequence of this, some moderately-ranked proposals that would normally have been allocated time were unsuccessful this time. Of the 122 proposals, 57 were scheduled. For Parkes the oversubscription rate was close to 1.0 and 32 of the 35 submitted proposals were accepted and scheduled.

The diagrams shown on the web page show that typically 40% of scheduled time is allocated to proposals with overseas PIs while approximately 35% and 25% of time is allocated to proposals with PIs at the ATNF and at other Australian institutions. Time allocation for all proposals is done on the basis of scientific merit. In 2003 the proposals included some 410 authors. Of these 45 were from the ATNF, 85 were from 14 other institutions in Australia and 280 were from 120 overseas institutions in 20 countries.

For 2004 MAYT, 29 of the 122 proposals included one or more PhD students. Of these 14 proposals were allocated time. The 15 proposals that were not allocated time included four proposals with three Australian PhD students (one student was included on two proposals). All other PhD students on unsuccessful programs are at overseas institutions.

The TAC members for the 2004 June meeting are Brian Schmidt (Chair), Lister

Staveley-Smith, Wilfred Walsh, Anne Green, Andrew Melatos and Paul Francis. Members are selected (by the Steering Committee) to cover a broad range of astronomical expertise (and geographical distribution). The current membership includes three members with strong radio astronomy expertise.

### **Outreach Report**

I would like to highlight two recent outreach activities:

### **Teachers Workshop**

A highly successful workshop for high school teachers, *Astronomy from the Ground Up*, was held at Parkes on 12-14 May 2004. This was attended by 18 teachers from NSW, Vic, ACT and Queensland who came from both private and Government schools. The workshop was targeted at teachers of astronomy for years 7-10 and aimed to cover all of the syllabus content for those years.

The three-day workshop was organised and put together by the ATNF Education Officer (Rob Hollow). It included lectures, activities, resources sessions, viewing nights and some excellent catering. The teachers were also provided with a resource kit to take away. The feedback from the teachers was extremely positive with comments such as 'The best workshop I've been to in 30 years of teaching'. The teachers clearly valued the opportunity to meet with astronomers but also to have educational resources provided that will assist them with their high school teaching. Following this meeting we have heard from several of the teachers who are now using content and tools given in the course in their schools. Further workshops are planned.

# **Outreach website**

Following the appointment in March of our new webmaster (Chris Owen), on 14 May we released a new website for ATNF Outreach and Education at

#### http://www.outreach.atnf.csiro.au

This site aims to provide information for the general public, politicians, and in particular for school students and their teachers. This site replaces the outreach and education information previously distributed in different parts of the ATNF websites. A major component of the new site is the inclusion of the content required by teachers of high school astronomy. This will initially cover the NSW year-12 syllabus but will then be extended to cover other content taught in other states, and content for year 11 and junior high-school students. The site will continue to grow rapidly over the next few months.

# Advice sought

ATUC may wish to seek user feedback on the the change over to 6-month terms. The start of the first 6-month term begins in October 2004 and I recommend that an appropriate time to seek such feedback would be around March 2005 – i.e. after the completion of the first six-month semester.

We would appreciate any feedback or suggestions from ATUC on the new outreach website.