

## ATNF ATUC MEMORANDUM

**To:** ATUC  
**From:** Jessica Chapman  
**Date:** 23 November 2005  
**Subject:** National Facility Support Report

### 1. TAC information

#### *TAC statistics and ATNF publications*

TAC statistics are provided on the ATNF website at the address  
<http://www.atnf.csiro.au/observers/tacstats>.

ATUC has requested a comparison of the time allocation for proposals with ATNF PIs and with other Australian PIs.

For the period January 2001 – March 2006, the following statistics apply:

#### **ATCA proposals with ATNF PIs:**

83% of submitted proposals were allocated time.  
Total time allocated / total time requested = 0.75<sup>1</sup>  
Total time requested = 16,781 hours

#### **ATCA proposals with other-Australian PIs:**

77% of submitted proposals were allocated time.  
Total time allocated / total time requested = 0.65  
Total time requested = 11,746 hours

#### **Parkes proposals with ATNF PIs:**

94% of submitted proposals were allocated time.  
Total time allocated / total time requested = 0.75  
Total time requested = 12,396 hours

#### **Parkes proposals with other-Australian PIs:**

90% of submitted proposals were allocated time.  
Total time allocated / total time requested = 0.85  
Total time requested = 10,575 hours

Overall, proposals with PIs from other Australian institutions are almost as successful at gaining telescope time as proposals with ATNF PIs and this indicates that the 'quality' of ATNF and non-ATNF Australian proposals is similar. However In 2004 & 2005, ATCA and Parkes proposals with ATNF PIs requested a considerably larger amount of time than other Australian proposals and this explains the difference in the time allocation.

#### ***Publications***

The number of publications for 2005 are not finalised but the total number of publications appears to be similar to 2004. So far, the publications database includes 94 refereed publications that include data from ATNF facilities, and 31 other refereed and published publications that include ATNF staff. For comparison the number of refereed publications for

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<sup>1</sup> Calculated for all submitted proposals, including those that were not allocated time.

2004, with ATNF data, was 111. The publication numbers for 2005 will be finalised early in 2006.

Publication numbers for the ATCA, Mopra, Parkes and Tidbinbilla do not include VLBI papers. However the contribution of the different facilities to VLBI papers will be included as additional information in the 2005 annual report.

## 2. OPAL

OPAL (Online Proposal Applications and Links) is a new web-based application for telescope proposal submissions. OPAL was released on 1 November, after extensive testing for user acceptance and robustness. Several tutorial and demonstrations on OPAL were held in November and so far the feedback on OPAL has been very positive. Many suggestions made during the testing period have been implemented.

All telescope applications for the deadline on 15 December 2005 must be made using OPAL. OPAL is available at <http://opal.atnf.csiro.au>. A Users Guide is also available at this address.

We welcome any feedback on OPAL from ATUC.

## 3. ATNF outreach and education

In 2006, the ATNF outreach and education will include activities in WA. In addition to the Parkes teachers Workshop, we will be holding a 2.5-day teachers workshop in Geraldton around March 2006. This will be held in collaboration with Scitech and local teachers.

ATNF in conjunction with schools in the Mid West region of WA, Scitech and Charles Sturt University Remote Telescope has applied for an Australian Schools Innovation in Science Technology and Mathematics (ASISTM) grant from DEST. The Expression of Interest was successful and the proposal is now on the short-list. If successful, ATNF staff will spend time with schools in remote WA near the Mileura site during 2006. The scheme “Wildflowers in the Sky” aims to engage students in science through astronomy. Students will be engaged by hands-on activities and inquiry-based learning to observe the day and night sky using a range of technologies from the unaided eye through to remotely controlling telescopes via the internet. They will actively collaborate with students in other schools and work with scientists from the ATNF.

As well as the development of the new exhibits and displays at the Narrabri Visitors Centre, the centre is now showing *ViewSpace* in the theatrette. This is a multimedia exhibit for science centres and planetariums developed by the Space Telescope Science Institute. *ViewSpace* provides beautiful high resolution images, movies and animations with interpretive captions that are regularly updated to incorporate the latest astronomy news.

The ATNF is now also a member of the Star Tec group (State of the Art Research Telescopes Education Consortium). It allows education and outreach staff from the major observatories to meet and discuss common issues and developments and share ideas. Other members include Gemini, Keck, NRAO, NOAO, SALT and STScI.