ATNF Director's Response
ATUC meeting May 2010

ATUC Recommendations	Director's Response	Traffic light	Status
Commendations and successes			
1. ATUC would like to commend all observatory staff for their continued support at the telescopes and excellent service that they provide to users. Mopra users are particularly appreciative of Balt Indermuehle's amazing support and dedication.	Noted and thanks		
2. ATNF students commend administrative staff for the excellent organisation of their travel and accommodation bookings, which makes ATNF visit totally pain-free for the students.	Noted and thanks		
3. ATUC congratulates the ATNF on the success of Diggidumble in the first ASKAP test.	Noted and thanks		
4. Parkes 5-6GHz. ATUC congratulates ATNF on getting the C-band 5GHz receiver operational for the high-ranking LBA proposal.	Noted and thanks		
Matters arising from October 2009 ATUC Report			
1. Matters Arising #4: ATUC is pleased to see progress on fast mapping with Mopra and would now like to know if this mode is available to users. If so, it should be advertised and website updated accordingly.	This mode is now available. It was advertised in the call for proposals for 2010OCT (released May 15th): "Recent changes to MOPS have enabled "fast mapping" observations to be made, with a correlator cycle time of 256-milliseconds rather than the standard 2-seconds, for a reduced number of MOPS zoom bands (no more than 4 is recommended)." The website will be updated.	Green	
2. Recommendation #1: ATUC is pleased to see progress with zoom modes. To ensure that users remain informed of the latest progress with CABB and associated Miriad updates, ATUC recommends that ATNF create a CABB "What's New" page, and suggests that the current CABB webpage be reorganised so that it is clearly a one-stop-	Thanks for the suggestions. We will implement these. The web page reorganisation will be done shortly. It will take some time to move the atca forum; in the meantime we will pay the vendor to remove the advertising.	Green	

	shop for all CABB-related issues, including obvious links to the atcaforum, the CABB-Wiki, and MIRIAD updates. ATUC also strongly recommends ATNF move atcaforums (which is an excellent resource) to an ATNF website to avoid inappropriate advertising.		
3.	Recommendation #4: ATUC notes that initial results of ATCA single-dish mode tests (conducted as part of the MALT-45 project) are encouraging, but understands there are a few problems that need to be addresses before this capability can be offered as a general user mode (such as the ability to do fast pointings and ensure a data format that can be used by single-dish processing software like livedata/gridzilla). ATUC looks forward to an update from ATNF (with input from Andrew Walsh) in May 2011.	With Andrew, we are investigating whether an on-the-fly (continuous drive) mode will be sufficient for his program. See also response to recommendation #7 below. We will report next May, as requested.	Yellow
4.	Recommendation # 6: ATUC recommends that ATNF install an all-sky webcam at Mopra (like the APT webcam at Coonabarabran) with an active cross which traces where the telescope is pointing. Given the plans to move to remote observing at all ATNF sites, and given the current frequency of remote observations being conducted with ATCA, ATUC strongly recommends the installation of such webcams for all sites.	Thank you for the clarification of the previous request. We now understand that the need is for understanding weather in the direction of pointing. We are investigating possibilities that will be appropriate for day and night observing, cope with any pointing near the sun, and take into account RFI concerns.	Yellow
5.	Recommendation #9: ATUC looks forward to seeing the Parkes continuum/polarization software being made available for general access.	The software has been completed. A little more work on the documentation is needed; the software will be released this winter.	Green
6.	Recommendation #13: ATUC recommends ATNF publish accepted proposal abstracts to ADS. Currently only users with OPAL accounts can access successful proposal abstracts. Advertising successful projects on ADS will provide wider visibility of the research being conducted with ATNF facilities and aide in fostering international collaborations.	The cover sheets and observations tables for all OPAL proposals that are allocated time are available through the OPAL 'Search Proposals' tool. As ATUC notes, this is currently restricted to the 3,000 or so users with OPAL accounts. As a first stage towards making these more accessible we will remove this restriction so that anyone, with or without an OPAL account, can search the proposals.

At present we are uncertain of the resources that would be needed to provide abstracts through ADS (or other | Yellow |

	providers). We will investigate this and report back to ATUC.		
7. Recommendation #16: ATUC understands the winmail.dat attachment to CASS staff emails is not under the control of CASS. However, as this issue affects a large number of ATNF users and external collaborators of CASS staff, ATUC recommends CASS raise the issue with CSIRO IM&T.	This issue appears to arise when users of Microsoft Exchange servers (e.g. CSIRO's server) send emails in .rtf format. For example, the itineraries from our travel agent, QBT, are often attached in this format. We will educate CASS staff that routinely communicate with users on how to avoid this situation. We will continue to investigate. However, specific feedback from individuals affected will also help us to resolve this issue.	Yellow	
ATUC recommendations (ATNF Response requested)			
Marsfield			
1. ATUC understands that many visitors are having trouble accessing the Marsfield wireless network RPL-WLAN. Issues include DHCP leases not renewing and also connection timeouts. ATUC notes the problem is seen on both Windows and Mac platforms. ATUC urges CASS to investigate the matter.	There have been some difficulties in the past, but we are not aware of any recent issues. Visitors to the site should (and usually do) contact CASS computing staff when there are difficulties.	Green	
2. It has been noted there are regular problems conducting video-conferencing at Marsfield. With projects such as ASKAP SSPs, this will become more of a problem as more external groups come online to use these facilities. External users have also reported problems uploading talks to the at_meetings lists, with messages being bounced. Indeed, at_meetings is only available to external users with an ATNF account, which causes problems when conducting astronomy meetings. ATUC recommends that: a. there be clear instructions to CASS staff on how to book and use the Marsfield tele/video conferencing facilities; b. that the issues with the at_meetings list be addressed and an alternative solution be found to ensure all astronomers who wish to attended ATNF meetings can access and	a. Our goal will be to ensure that every meeting with external participants has an organiser/host (e.g. the ATUC secretary) that is trained in local IT procedures and how to get help. b. Posting to this list is restricted to csiro.au , aao.gov.au and edu.au addresses to reduce spam. Speakers should contact a local staff member when these constraints pose difficulties. The at_meeting list contains a number of presentations that are not intended to be generally public. For some meetings (e.g. ATUC) it may be preferable to place the talks on the individual meeting's website. This information will be placed on the at_meetings web page. c. A contractor will be engaged to do this in the near future.	Green	

	upload talks; and		
c.	that the hanging microphones in the lecture theatre be made operational so that remote meeting participants can participate in discussion sessions.		

Mopra Fast mapping			
3. To meet the fast mapping requirements at Mopra, ATUC recommends the default MOPS correlator cycle time be increased from 2.0 to 2.048 seconds. This would have minimal impact on other users and will make fast mapping more seamless for those who wish to use it. ATUC would like to know if fast mapping is now a standard mode of observing, and if so the Mopra website should be updated to both advertise this and inform users of the process.	Investigations so far have not indicated any showstoppers, but there are potential implications of the change that we will investigate before proceeding. We note that time-binned data (for flagging) would no longer be aligned with the UT second.	Green	

VLBI			
4. ATUC notes it is not clear to (new) user involved in VLBI projects how the data is processed and how long users are expected to wait for their data. ATUC recommends the LBA web pages be updated to include this information, including details of a contact person(s) to whom issues can be addressed.	PIs are contacted when their LBA observation is scheduled, and given details of where the data will be correlated, and the email address of a contact person at the correlator. There have been issues with a backlog of data to be correlated, but we expect that to be resolved by October. This information will be provided on the LBA webpage.	Green	

OPAL			
5. ATUC notes there are concerns about the potential duplication of millimetre observations between current large survey projects and smaller projects. ATUC recommends there be an option in OPAL proposals that asks "Have you checked the specifications for large projects to see if your observations can be obtained there?", similar to the current "Have you checked the ATOA?" question.	A question on this will be added to the proposals cover sheets for the next semester. The information on Large Projects is provided by the science teams with a link put on the ATNF website at http://www.atnf.csiro.au/research/large_proj.html At present not all teams have provided info on this projects and we will contact those who have not yet done this. We can give ATUC an update on this at the next meeting.	Green	

ATCA			

6.	ATUC notes large-scale surveys such as MALT-45 require up to 14000 pointings which currently equates to a large number (~9000) of schedule files. To cater for these types of surveys, ATUC recommends ATNF increase the number of pointings that can be done in an ATCA mosaic (currently 500) and also increase the number of commands. ATUC also notes it is not possible to program the ATCA in galactic coordinates and would like this to be available.	We will address these requests. There are some issues (e.g. memory limitations, speed of web scheduler) that need consideration before any changes can be made.	Yellow	
7.	ATUC recommends pointing antennas on quick timescales be addressed. One user has expressed concern some antennas could not keep up with six-second pointings. ATUC understands Phil Edwards is aware of the issue which involves motor brushes.	We are investigating the antenna drive control issues. At this stage it is not possible to say whether we will be able to improve the antenna performance.	Yellow	
8.	ATUC is delighted to see the calibrator database being updated and looks forward to the new data being online soon. ATUC notes the summary, flux history plot and text file of the existing database can give different values for some sources, warranting the rapid deployment of the new calibrator database.	A beta version will be released within the next month.	Green	
9.	ATUC requests that the DA manual for ATCA be updated to include CABB details as they come to hand. ATUC also strongly recommends DA's be properly trained for both Mopra and ATCA.	CABB documentation will be added to the DA folder in Narrabri. Currently DAs get a brief introduction/refresher to Mopra and ATCA on their first day. The training level for the ATCA is generally higher. As a result DAs act in more of a referral mode for Mopra. We note that TOAD on Mopra has a higher level of fault-finding and advice than any system on the ATCA, while the ATCA is more complicated.	Yellow	
Tidbinbilla				
10.	Following from discussions during the ATUC Science Meeting held on 25 May, ATUC sees the need to update users on the current and future capabilities of Tidbinbilla (i.e., the K-band upgrading). ATUC suggests that	This will be done as the new capabilities come on line.	Green	

documentation on current and proposed upgrades be made available on the Tidbinbilla website.			
11. ATUC notes with the incorporation of Tidbinbilla into CASS, it is now timely to develop a Tidbinbilla Science Priorities document.	The fraction of time available at Tidbinbilla is small compared to that available at other ATNF facilities and it previously appeared only in the LBA science priorities section. As we revise the ATNF science priorities we will consider including those for standalone Tidbinbilla observations.	Yellow	
12. It is clear that the science capabilities of Tibdinbilla with be greatly enhanced with OTF mapping. ATUC recommends OTF spectral-line mapping be addressed at Tidbinbilla, and that suitable CASS staff with OTF mapping experience assist the Tidbinbilla staff to making this work.	Changes to enable OTF mapping at Tidbinbilla would require NASA support, with expertise and support from ATNF Operations. We will look into this but are not able to quantify the effort required, or to commit to pursuing this option.	Yellow	
Other			
13. ATUC is pleased to see the concept of survey-archives being discussed in Tim Cornwell's presentation. ATUC strongly recommends ATNF provide services and tools to allow survey projects to release their data projects, e.g. cubes, images and catalogues, in a VO-compliant way on the ATNF website.	We recognise the need to provide some assistance to Science Teams (of current facilities) who wish to release their data products on the ATNF website using VO services. In 2010, as a trial, we will be providing support to a Mopra Large Survey team to enable their data products to be released through the ATNF archives. Our resources for this are limited but we will also aim to provide at least some assistance to other groups developing data products and will advise ATUC further once the plans for this are better established. As background and for preparation towards our future VO work, we note that many VO tools already exist and are freely available. A useful starting point for accessing VO information and tools is http://www.euro-vo.org/pub/. We advise ATUC that the ATNF has not yet itself developed VO services and tools but intends to develop services as part of the work described above.	Green	
14. ATUC notes that some users are concerned with the rate	We will investigate alternative data transfer protocols and	Green	

of CABB and MOPS data transfer rates from ATNF to their home institute. ATUC recommends ATNF look at faster transfer protocols than provided by scp and the provision of external hard drives for users to take away or be mailed.	report at the next ATUC meeting. We will provide disks for purchase at the ATCA.		
15. Given the rapid rate of development of MIRIAD to accommodate CABB data, ATUC notes users need to be informed of these changes. ATUC strongly recommends ATNF find a suitable way of letting users know what these changes are which might affect and/or improve their data reduction strategies.	The main miriad webpage has a link to information on how to update miriad. We will make it clearer to observers the timescale on which miriad is updated by adding information to the revised CABB webpage.	Green	