

**ATNF Director's Response
ATUC meeting 14 – 15 October 2010**

ATUC Recommendations	Director's Response	Traffic Light
Commendations and successes		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ATUC congratulates CASS staff for running a very successful Radio Astronomy School. • ATUC is excited by the LS receiver upgrade and pleased to see it is largely on schedule. • ATUC appreciates the hard work being carried out to ensure that the CABB functionality continues to improve. • ATUC was very pleased to see the large increase in Tidbinbilla proposals for the last proposal round, along with the continued high national and international demand for the LBA. • ATUC is pleased to see the release of the updated ATCA calibrator database. • ATUC congratulate George Hobbs on his Julius Career Award success, and Kate Brooks and Ilana Feain on their Ruby Payne Scott Award successes. 	Noted and thanks	
Matters arising from the May ATUC report		
1. Matters Arising #2: ATUC is please to see that the CABB website has been turned into a 'one stop shop' of all CABB-related links. We continue to recommend that ATNF move both the CABB forum and wiki onto a CSIRO site, given that CABB is a national facility.	It is planned to move the ATCA forum in-house in the near future.	Green
2. Matters Arising #4: ATUC is delighted to hear that ATNF is installing an all-sky camera with pointing cross-hairs at Mopra for the winter 2011 season. We reiterate our recommendation that ATNF consider installing similar systems at all of the observatories to aid monitoring of remote observations - especially in the coming SOC era.	Noted. We will consider this.	Yellow
3. Matters Arising #6: ATUC is pleased that progress is being made to enable abstracts of successful proposals to be uploaded to ADS. We have provided ATNF with an appropriate ADS contact person, Alberto Accomazzi, who is more than willing to assist with this process. We strongly encourage ATNF to contact Alberto for assistance.	<p>We thank ATUC for the contact information for ADS.</p> <p>We have contacted ADS and expect the OPAL abstracts to be made available through ADS soon. We will advise ATUC once this is in place.</p>	Green

<p>4. Matters Arising #7: Prior to this ATUC meeting, the winmail.dat issue arose again (whereby emails sent to some non-CSIRO users by CSIRO staff turns attachments into an unreadable file called winmail.dat). ATUC strongly recommends ATNF continue to investigate this problem, and we encourage all users to report the problem to Shaun Amy to help solve the problem.</p>	<p>On-going investigation of this suggests that the problem occurs at Universities that use Google for their mail server rather than Microsoft (which we understand includes JCU). We will continue to encourage CSIRO staff not to use winmail.dat (which generally occurs without their knowledge). We request that all instances of winmail.dat being received be reported to Shaun Amy so that we can get a clearer understanding of the problem. Additionally, people affected by this are encouraged to raise this with their local IT staff and to arrange for a winmail.dat reader to be installed (and to raise awareness of the server incompatibility issue).</p>	<p>Yellow</p>
<p>5. Recommendation #1: ATUC notes that wireless stability issues still exist at Marsfield. We encourage users to report any loss of service so that ATNF can address the problem.</p>	<p>We are aware of some difficulties with the "csiro-internal" wireless network that is for the use of CSIRO staff and affiliates, who should use the normal support channels. We are not aware of recent concerns with RPL-WLAN, which we maintain for ATNF visitors. However, any faults with the latter network should be reported to Shaun Amy.</p>	<p>Green</p>
<p>6. Recommendation #2: ATUC looks forward to the hanging microphones being operational in the Marsfield lecture theatre for the next meeting. We note the at_meetings page does not indicate that only csiro, aao and edu accounts can post to the site, and suggest that this be explicitly mentioned.</p>	<p>This is being addressed. The web page has been updated.</p>	<p>Green</p>
<p>7. Recommendation #3: ATUC is pleased to see that fast mapping is now available on Mopra. We understand that the default cycle time will be changed from 2s to 2.048s to enable seamless fast mapping by users. We recommend that ATNF ensure that all Mopra users are aware of this, especially those using old scripts.</p>	<p>We will notify users of this intended change in the next call for proposals.</p>	<p>Green</p>
<p>8. Recommendation #4: We note that the ATNF LBA webpages still do not explicitly contain correlator personnel contact information or clear information about how user's LBA data is processed. We recommend that this information be made more clear on the ATNF LBA webpages.</p>	<p>The main LBA web page (http://www.atnf.csiro.au/vlbi/) includes links to the Curtin correlator pages, and to up-to-date information on scheduling and correlation. As the scheduling page notes, correlator contact information is sent to PIs at the time their observation is scheduled. This contact information has now additionally been added to the wiki page.</p>	<p>Green</p>
<p>9. Recommendation #6: We understand that the issue of more than 500 mosaic pointings for ATCA is being investigated. We look forward to hearing a resolution to this issue at the next ATUC meeting.</p>	<p>We will provide a report on this current limitation at the next ATUC meeting.</p>	<p>Yellow</p>

<p>10. Recommendation #7: We understand attempts have been made to determine the ATCA antenna drive problems but that the cause has not yet been found. We encourage ATNF to continue investigating this problem.</p>	<p>Additional resources have been allocated to mine the monica archives and determine whether any identifiable patterns emerge in antenna pointing. These will also shed light in a quantitative manner on how effective previous efforts to tune or tweak the antenna pointing have been.</p>	<p>Yellow</p>
<p>11. Recommendation #12: ATUC was encouraged to hear that CASS staff will have a vacation student investigating OTF mapping at Tidbinbilla this summer. We look forward to hearing about this project at the next ATUC meeting.</p>	<p>Noted.</p>	<p>Green</p>
<p>12. Recommendation #14: Given the continued increase in data volumes produced by CABB's zoom modes, ATUC urges ATNF to monitor state-of-the-art network based data transfer protocols and try to make these available where possible to all users.</p>	<p>We will continue to monitor developments with transfer protocols.</p>	<p>Green</p>
<p>New Recommendations - ATNF Response Requested</p>		
<p>1. Science Operations Centre (SOC):</p> <p><i>Recommendation 1a:</i> ATUC recommends that SOC trials continue and ensure that a wider range of observing modes are covered.</p> <p><i>Recommendation 1b:</i> ATUC recommends that ATNF release a proposed operations plans for the SOC.</p> <p><i>Recommendation 1c:</i> ATUC recommends that ATNF carefully consider the student experience with the telescopes.</p>	<p>We thank ATUC for the helpful comments on the SOC Pilot study. We will provide an open report with the feedback fro this trial.</p> <p>1a) We plan to extend the trials in 2011 and these will include both Mopra and the ATCA. Details will be made available with the announcement of opportunity on 15 November.</p> <p>1b) The ATUC will be consulted during the development of the SOC and its operating model, and kept informed of the project as it proceeds, including timelines and the effects on observers.</p> <p>1c) CASS will continue to place a high priority on the need for students to gain observing experience and understanding of the techniques of radio astronomy. This is and will be achieved through a range of means including PhD supervision, synthesis schools and observing. We anticipate that students will continue to make several observing trips to Observatories during their PhDs.</p>	<p>Green</p> <p>Green</p> <p>Green</p>
<p>2. Software:</p> <p><i>Recommendation 2a:</i> ATUC strongly recommends that ATNF allocate appropriate resources to ensure that one of the existing data reduction packages can reduce all CABB data.</p>	<p>2a) We believe that Miriad can be used to process all current and expected future CABB data. If there are any datasets that cannot be processed, users should contact Jamie Stevens.</p> <p>Additional algorithms that capitalise more fully on CABB would be a substantial advantage (e.g., to address wide-field, wide-bandwidth issues). Longer-term options for ATNF data reduction software (e.g. CASA, new miriad functionality) are currently being evaluated, but current resource levels would not allow a significant increase in effort. ATUC will be consulted as plans are made.</p>	<p>Green</p> <p>Yellow</p>

<p><i>Recommendation 2b:</i> ATUC strongly recommends that ATNF advise users how to reduce their CABB polarisation data.</p>	<p>2b) There is a pathway for the reduction of CABB polarisation data, and the miriad manual will be updated in the near future. There are also relatively straightforward enhancements to miriad to improve polarisation reduction, and these are being discussed by the miriad development team.</p>	<p>Green</p>
<p>3. Documentation:</p> <p><i>Recommendation 3a:</i> ATUC recommends that ATNF find a way to report to users on changes to the AT Users Guide which might affect the way that ATCA observations should be done and any miriad changes that affect data reduction strategies.</p> <p><i>Recommendation 3b:</i> ATUC recommends that ATNF address the lack of documentation of Parkes National Facility instruments.</p> <p><i>Recommendation 3c:</i> ATUC recommends that ATNF keep the ASKAP webpages up to date.</p>	<p>3a) This is under consideration. A first step is likely to be the addition of a "last updated" date added to each section.</p> <p>3b) This is a long-standing issue, but is resource limited. As noted in recommendation 4, the Guest instrumentation Policy will make clearer the obligation of those providing guest instruments to provide suitable documentation and we anticipate that this will improve the situation for future instrumentation.</p> <p>3c) We recognise that the current pages are out of date and are working to improve this</p>	<p>Green</p> <p>Yellow</p> <p>Green</p>
<p>4. Guest instrument policy:</p> <p><i>Recommendation 4a:</i> ATUC recommends that ATNF consult NRAO and other observatories about their guest instrument policies before finalising their own.</p> <p><i>Recommendation 4b:</i> ATUC recommends that ATNF carefully consider the resource implications of requiring all guest instrument data be hosted in the ATOA, and allocate the appropriate resources necessary if it is decided that all data should indeed be stored in the ATOA.</p>	<p>This is underway.</p> <p>This will be considered. We agree that the necessary resources should be allocated if it this is made policy.</p>	<p>Green</p> <p>Green</p>
<p>5. Warwick Wilson's retirement:</p>	<p>CASS is continuing to investigate a number of options as part of a succession plan for Warwick. Warwick Wilson's expertise is unique and there is no single individual within CASS capable of assuming all of Warwick's role(s) in the short term. CABB development is proceeding and discussions are underway with a number of individuals with the goal of ensuring an orderly handover and continuation of the CABB development after Warwick's retirement.</p>	<p>Green</p>
<p>6. ATNF students:</p> <p><i>Recommendation 6a:</i> ATUC recommends that clear guidelines be provided to students at the commencement of their postgraduate studies, and that a form be prepared for ATNF student funding requests, clearly stating what information is required.</p>	<p>Extensive guidelines for the CASS co-supervised student program, including downloadable forms for making travel requests can be found at the student webpage given below. With regard to CSIRO top-up grants, there is unfortunately no ongoing funding available for such support from within CASS, although a link to the relevant information is given on the webpage. Instead, there are occasional opportunities for top-up support. When we have been able to secure such support for Astrophysics PhDs, these opportunities are advertised widely.</p> <p>http://www.atnf.csiro.au/research/graduate/scholars.html</p>	<p>Green</p>

<p>7. Support for large projects:</p> <p><i>Recommendation 7a:</i> ATUC strongly recommends that ATNF provide a database server, software and support to allow the results from large surveys to be accessed online by the community.</p>	<p>An increasing amount of ATNF data is being made available for data mining: ATOA has been expanded in recent years to include Mopra (MOPS-era) data, Parkes (spectral line) data, and it will include LBA data in the near future. A selection of Parkes pulsar data has been the subject of a just-released trial with ANDS, and we will be drawing on the experience of this project to further enhance ATOA. ASKAP will draw on the resources of the Pawsey Centre, and we are confident an appropriate solution will be identified.</p> <p>For completed surveys, such as HIPASS, data servers have been developed by the teams themselves. We are aware of the problems that can then arise as the developers move on and hardware upgrades result in incompatibilities, and there have been initial discussions within ATNF on how this situation might be improved. Our available resources for providing National Facility support for the data products from the previous ATNF Large Surveys are very limited. However, as a first step towards this, we will be working with the MALT90 science team to provide National Facility access to the data products from their survey. These will be made available as part of a significant upgrade to the ATOA that will take place over the next few months. If this is successful then, depending on available resources, it can be extended to other surveys.</p> <p>Our long-term goal is to provide a uniform system with data products, raw data from current facilities. This will include all ASKAP surveys and other surveys as feasible</p> <p>We will advise ATUC later on the progress made with the data products for MALT90 and the ATOA upgrade.</p>	<p>Yellow</p>
<p>8. CABB scheduler access:</p> <p><i>Recommendation 8a:</i> ATUC recommends that ATNF consider an open access version of the CABB scheduler for potential users without ATNF accounts.</p>	<p>We will consider this.</p>	<p>Yellow</p>
<p>9. Car for observers:</p> <p><i>Recommendation 9a:</i> ATUC recommends that ATNF consider providing a visitor car for observers while on-site (to use offsite) and provide guidelines for use of ATNF cars.</p>	<p>Resources preclude the provision of a dedicated car for observers. However, with advance notice, the Site Managers can usually provide a vehicle for short trips to town. Visitors requiring extensive use of a vehicle for off-site travel are advised to rent one. Rental agencies serve Parkes and Narrabri airports. The policy on observer use of observatory vehicles will be updated and made available to observers.</p>	<p>Green</p>
<p>10. ATNF memo series:</p> <p><i>Recommendation 10a:</i> ATUC recommends that the resurrection of the ATNF memo series be considered.</p>	<p>Much recent CASS development effort has gone into ASKAP and we will make both the ASKAP memos and ATNF memos more visible. We are committed to continuing to document technical progress in our memo series.</p>	<p>Green</p>