

OPTICON Telescope Directors Meeting

9 September 2010

Rectorate Building, University of Lisbon

Attendees:		
Andersen, Johannes [Chair]	Colless, Mathew (videolink)	Kiselman, Dan
Balcells, Marc	Davies, John	Melnick, Jorge
Barrado, David	Davis, Gary	Molinari, Emilio
Bettonvil, Felix	Dennefeld, Michel	Schlichenmiaeer, Rolf
Boër, Michel	Gelly, Bernard	Steele, Iain
Boumis, Panayotis	Goudis, Christos	Veillet, Christian
Cabanac, Rémi	Gredel, Roland	

1) Welcome, Logistics and Apologies

J Andersen and Davies welcomed everyone to the meeting, thanked the JENAM committee for arranging the logistics and hospitality and gave apologies on behalf of those who were unable to attend. J Davies also introduced D Barrado, the new director of CAHA.

2) Minutes and Actions

The minutes of the last meeting held in Copenhagen on 28 October 2009 were accepted.

Actions from last meeting:

Action 1. All, minus the Nominees – Vote for next Chair of TDF at the conclusion of this meeting. Closed.

Action 2. J Davies – update the ToR in accordance with discussion under Item 5 of the agenda (sent 13 Nov 2009). Closed.

Action 3. All - TDF members to check the facilities information in infrastructures matrix provided is correct – by end of Nov. Closed.

Action 4. J Davies – double-check the ETSRC consultation period and reporting process with J Drew. Closed.

Action 5. J Andersen - further to the ETSRC report being available for review by TDF members a TDF Meeting should be arranged. This was not felt justified, Closed

Action 6. J Davies to think about what to put in writing re technical support requirements for Aristarchos' eventual accession to Programme. Not Done, Lapsed.

Action 7. The Aristarchos director to inform Review Committee (I Steele; R Gredel; J Melnick) when fully ready for review. (Lapsed)

Action 8. Directors to re-evaluate their TA-1 form using real costs for 2009. Closed.

Action 9. All – check figures in ‘FP7 Access calculator’ for accuracy. Closed.

Action 10. J Davies will build this extra ‘FFP’ step into the TAC process and will also seek volunteers from within the TDF to serve on it. Closed.

Action 11. J Davies, All – update ‘OPTICON TAC options’ document wtr decisions made under item 11 of the Agenda. Once this is done circulate the document to TDF for review. Done by end October 2009 - closed.

Action 12. All – ask Agencies for authority re Common TAC and FFP plans (dependent on Action 11). Done - closed.

3) Shape of FP7 Extension Proposal

This discussion formed the main content of the meeting as the TDF attempted to formulate a proposal that was consistent with the budgetary guidelines issued by the OPTICON board at its Malta meeting a few weeks earlier. The discussion extended over several hours and at its conclusion the following consensus was reached. It is worthy of note that, due a local emergency, the AAO director was unable to participate in the discussion regarding the exclusion of the AAT.

- We will aim for ‘all’ 2-4m time belonging to the owner agencies to be allocated via a single common TAC by the end of the FP7-2 contract.
- There will be a sudden switchover when all is ready, to be decided after a ‘PDR’ and a ‘CDR’
- We continue to run the existing CTAC while we develop precise procedures for the switch over.
- The telescopes in this CTAC will be all of the existing suite except AAO and UKST, subject to them passing the ‘revised matrix’ test.
- We assign of order 500K for solar access to be allocated by the EAST network, based on no less that 1 run/telescope/year
- We require of order 10-15% of time between now and D-DAY to continue to be allocated by the CTAC in order to test out existing systems and discover problems and prepare the community. We can work out what this number is ASAP. This is critical to allow the system to be tested before the switch
- To generate enough demand for the CTAC we urge all agencies to instruct non-national proposals to go to OPTICON TAC (as NOT has already done).
- After the switch, some TNA budget for PIs from non-telescope owner countries will still be needed. This will be based on the number of qualifying proposals under the CTAC between 2010A and D-Day
- Once the switchover is committed to (even if date is vague) it will be clear that facilities (i.e. existing and future instrumentation and perhaps even telescopes) can be rationalised along the lines of the ETSRC recommendations, and planning for this can start now.
- There is a need for a commitment from the agencies to back this process and not withdraw telescopes unilaterally.

- At intervals TBD, the balance of resources committed will be evaluated and adjusted if necessary.
- LPO integration remains desirable and can be done within the long term perspective set out by this plan

4) Training programmes

There was a discussion of splitting the telescopes in the programme into 4m and 2m classes and treating them differently. This was not supported.

5) Space mission support

There was considerable discussion of the importance of ground based telescopes for space mission support, particularly for Gaia follow up. However the problems of getting time for such programmes via the normal TAC processes are well understood. It was felt that if the Agencies who fund the telescopes think that such programmes are important, then they should make it clear at a political level and direct the telescopes to undertake such programmes on their own funding, outside the normal TAC process.

6) Date of next meeting

This was planned for the period 20 May-15 Jun 2010, depending on the fate of the proposal (TBC).