

EISCAT Scientific Association

Short Report from the 87th meeting of the Council held at the Saint Cross College, Oxford, UK, 2 – 3 November 2016

Present: Finland: Prof. A. Aikio, Prof. T. Pulkkinen and Dr. K. Sulonen, Japan: Dr. H. Miyaoka (Vice-Chairperson) and Dr. S. Nozawa, Norway: Prof. A. Brekke, Dr. B. Jacobsen, Dr. L. Lønnum, and Prof. I. Mann (Observer), P. R. of China: Prof. Q. Dong, Dr. Z. Ding and Prof. J. Wu, Sweden: Dr. T. Andersson and Prof. J. Gumbel, UK: Dr. M. Freeman and Dr. I. W. McCrea (Chairperson). By Invitation: Mrs. M. Vannas (AFC Chairperson) and Dr. T. Ulich (SOC Chairperson). From Headquarters: Mr. H. Andersson (Head of Administration) and Dr. C. Heinselman (Director).

This Short Report follows the agenda order.

Council related

1. Adoption of the agenda

The agenda is adopted as presented.

2. Approval of the minutes of the 86th meeting

The minutes from the 86th meeting are approved and recognised as a true record of the meeting.

3. Matters arising from the 86th meeting

The matters identified in the 86th meeting have either been completed or will be considered further in this meeting.

Reporting

4. Report from the Director

The staffing remains satisfactory, though a few senior staff members have started to discuss their plans to retire, and replacements will eventually be needed.

The 2011 and 2012 Annual Reports have now been published. The 2013 report will also be ready too. Material for the 2014 and 2015 reports is still being accepted.

Recent changes to the mining activity on Svalbard will create issues for the Svalbard radar operations, particularly during weekends. The reason is that snow-clearing of the road to Mine 7, located en-route to the EISCAT site, will only be done when mining is ongoing – now only on weekdays.

The new EISCAT Agreement is now only awaiting the signature of UK.

5. Report from the Administrative and Finance Committee

AFC recommends Council to approve the 2017 budget. The tax/VAT working group is looking into various options for how to handle local taxes. The easiest approach would

be to get a tax refunding mechanism to work in all three host countries. Other alternatives are also being considered.

6. Report from the Scientific Oversight Committee

SOC discussed at their latest meeting the AA-pool (All-Associates time) and a proposal to cover overpasses of JAXA's ERG satellite mission (Exploration of Energization and Radiation in Geospace) using AA time. China will also launch a polar-orbiting research satellite during the coming year and AA time may also be allocated to cover the passes of that satellite.

SOC supports the plasma line receiver upgrade as suggested by Norway. The required software and adaptations will be provided either in-kind or as a gift. The needed hardware will be acquired by EISCAT. The hardware component cost is already included in the budget for next year. It is planned to use the same new technology at all EISCAT installations.

SOC is collecting a list of EISCAT's major scientific achievements. Suggested contributions should be sent to the SOC Chairperson.

There are no concrete plans yet for the next radar school. The one held this year, in Sodankylä, was a joint EISCAT/US-community school. The EISCAT Symposium will be held in Japan, 26-30 May, 2017.

[EISCAT_3D related](#)

7. Overall (funding) status

The UK situation looks fairly positive. A funding decision may come in the "Autumn Statement" budget plan, which will be presented on November 23, 2016. The primary strategy is for UK to cover most/all of the short-fall still remaining, in order to reach the Phase 1 threshold. A potential UK fall-back position has also been detailed.

The Japanese situation is as before; EISCAT_3D remains a high-priority project but is not yet funded.

China has made some funding progress. EISCAT_3D is part of an overall international collaboration project plan which includes space weather research and data. This collaboration includes various Chinese universities, the Chinese Space Agency and the Polar Institute. A better view on the funding prospects will be known before the end of the year.

There are no changes to the commitments already given by Finland, Norway and Sweden, including the condition that a decision to start the implementation work should be made before the end of 2016.

Council notes the developments in China, Japan and UK and that time is running out. A decision to start the EISCAT_3D implementation is formally needed before the end of the year, in order to secure the already committed funds from the Nordic countries. Council decides, therefore, to have an extraordinary meeting in the week beginning December 12, 2016. Inputs for this meeting will be the status of the funding endeavours in China, Japan and UK, together with updated costs and project

implementation statistics from Headquarters. The meeting will be held as an e-meeting.

8. First report of the EISCAT3D_PfP project

The EISCAT3D_PfP (Preparation for Production) project has now reached the end of its first year and the first periodic report was submitted to the European Commission on October 27, 2016. The project is closely following the initial plan, though a decision was made to change the procurement strategy, meaning that some of the industrial activities will start later than initially planned. This change will not have any impact on the end result.

The procurements for the full system will adhere to public procurement rules. Since these are normally only advertised within the EU, an information path needs to be established for the non-European Associates, such that suppliers in these countries will have a chance to bid for open tenders as well.

9. National and supporting activities (e-Infrastructure, sites, etc.)

Methods for sharing information between EISCAT and the various national consortia are discussed. In particular, there is a need to clarify how official statements are issued and shared. Headquarters will create a Q&A section on the EISCAT web-site which will cover the most important ongoing discussions.

Regular financial matters

10. 2016 Financial development

Council notes the forecast, which now indicates a small surplus for the year.

11. Budget 2017 and Five Years plan

Council considers the details of the budget document. Explanatory details for certain items are summarised. Council approves the 2017 budget and notes the Five Years Plan.

Other matters

12. Science presentation

Derek McKay, RAL Space, Rutherford Appleton Laboratory, UK, and Sodankylä Geophysical Observatory, Oulu University, Finland, gives a presentation entitled "KAIRA Science Results".

Council related

13. Restricted Session

Council meets in restricted session. The next Vice-Chairperson will come from Norway. The Norwegian delegation will name the individual in due course. The hand-over from the current Chairperson, Prof. I. W. McCrea, to the new chair, Prof. H. Miyaoka will take place at the end of the year.

14. Any other business

Council decides to award Prof. R. Fujii (Japan) the Sir Granville Beynon medal. A ceremony will be held in connection with the EISCAT meetings in Japan in the coming spring. Prof. Brekke is asked to make a first draft of the citation.

15. Summary of decisions and recommendations

The agreed decisions and recommendation are summarised (covered in the other agenda items).

16. Next meeting

The extraordinary meeting will be held mid-December, 2016. A Doodle poll will be set up to decide the exact meeting day. The meeting will be held as an e-meeting and/or via Skype.

The next regular meeting will be held at NIPR, Tokyo, 31 May – 1 June 2017.

The autumn 2017 meeting will be held in Finland, probably in Oulu. Dates have not been set yet but the meeting will be held around end October – early November.