

Short Report from the 75th meeting of the EISCAT Council Held 1 – 2 November 2010, British Antarctic Survey, Cambridge, UK

Present: Dr. A. Aikio, Finland, Dr. T. Andersson, Sweden, (Vice-Chairperson), Prof. A. Brekke, Norway, Prof. Q. Dong, P. R. of China (represented by Dr. J. Li), Dr. B. Jacobsen, Norway, Dr. K. Kauristie, Finland, (Chairperson), Dr. L. Lønnum, Norway (represented by Prof. A. Hanssen), Dr. I. W. McCrea, UK, Dr. H. Miyaoka, Japan, Prof. D. Murtagh, Sweden, Dr. S. Nozawa, Japan, Dr. K. Sulonen, Finland, Dr. M. Schultz, UK, Prof. J. Wu, P. R. of China and Dr. K. Zach, Germany

Invited and in Attendance: Mr. H. Andersson (HQ), Dr. R. Liu (SOC Chairperson), Dr. S. Nozawa (Observer Japan), Dr. E. Turunen, (HQ) and Dr. S. Wilson (Observer UK)

Apologies for absence: Prof. J. Röttger, Germany

The Chairperson welcomed all to the 75th meeting and thanked NERC for organising this meeting at the British Antarctic Survey premises. The new Council member for Japan, Dr. S. Nozawa, was greeted and Council expressed gratitude to Prof. R. Fujii, who stepped down. Prof. R. Fujii became a member of Council when Japan joined the Association, 1 April 1996.

The meeting started with a welcome address from, and introduction of, the British Antarctic Survey.

Associate Development

The German Associate, Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft (DFG), has written a formal confirmation that DFG will leave the Association at 31 December 2011. Discussions with Ukraine, through the Institute of Radio Astronomy at the National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine, are continuing. A delegation from EISCAT will visit Ukraine later in the year for discussions about Ukrainian Associateship.

Systems Status

The Director presented the systems status including the proposal to convert the two remote sites to VHF 224 MHz reception. Council noted the details but deferred any decision to a later meeting.

Discussions with a supplier regarding exchanging the current VHF transmitter at Ramfjordmoen are ongoing. A transmitter using the new EISCAT_3D frequency, at 233 MHz would allow continued use of the current VHF installation which would otherwise need to be stopped within the coming years due to required shift to the new frequency. Council noted the ideas but concluded that a transmitter exchange will need to be financed by external sources.

A collaboration between EISCAT and NERC have been discussed where the UK counterpart would extend its local data archive to cover all existing EISCAT data. A memorandum of understanding will be formulated regulating the terms.

Future Operations

Council accepted the proposal to do a test using a part of the Heating system as a magnetospheric radar and to run it for 10 hours in parallel with the ordinary systems during a Common Programme campaign later in the year. The data will then be analysed and particular attention will be put on potential interference between the two systems. The findings will be reported to Council.

The 3rd party time for this year was extended to 70 hours at the previous meeting. One new application had been received in time for the application deadline and the Chairperson had granted the applicant time.

Council accepted the Per-Review Programme details and the new PP experiment scheme will have its first application deadline 1 December 2010 for proposed operations in the first half of 2011.

Council will assess the results from the first Peer-Review trial at its next meeting.

EISCAT Roadmap

Council agreed to establish an EISCAT Roadmap that will cover current installations, new facilities, like EISCAT_3D, science goals, funding needs and opportunities, etc. The roadmap will be a live document and an initial bodied one will be ready by the next meeting.

Proposal to build a third antenna on Svalbard

The memorandum of understanding (MoU) between CRIRP and EISCAT were signed at a high-level meeting held in Beijing 15 July 2010: *“This memorandum of understanding between the EISCAT Scientific Association (EISCAT) and the China Research Institute of Radiowave Propagation (CRIRP) lays down the framework concerning the necessary actions, terms and responsibilities towards constructing a third antenna at EISCAT Svalbard radar (ESR) site, for combined use in incoherent scatter research by EISCAT and in the Chinese Moon Projects as follows.”*

A consultant was hired by EISCAT for the continued detailed work required in getting the permits needed to build the third antenna on Svalbard. A part of this work, the Delplan (Concept Plan), needed to be contracted to a specialist firm. These tasks were initiated by EISCAT but the cost will be covered by CRIRP.

The findings are expected to be ready spring 2011. A parallel process is the required operating permit needed for the communication link. That process is handled within EISCAT. If all applications are successful, a build decision could be taken mid-2011 with initial site work to commence early autumn 2011 and antenna build in 2012.

Administrative and financial status (general)

The longer term financial situation needs improving. The Council agreed proactive approach leading to substantial annual cost reductions latest in 2012 onwards were initiated by the Executives in June. In addition, further income, partially to come from inflationary compensation of the existing Associate contributions, will be needed.

Nine scientists at the University of Oulu reacted to the cost reduction plans and had submitted a petition to Council asking not to reduce the staff level at the Sodankylä site.

In reply, Council states:

Council reaffirms the long term commitment in the three host countries, Finland, Norway and Sweden and more specifically, the sites in Sodankylä, Kiruna, Ramfjordmoen and Longyearbyen, Svalbard. The challenging financial times foreseen in 2012 onwards needs though to be included in the longer term financial balancing and will, as it now appear, affect staff levels in all three countries. The Council decided proactive cost adaption approach, laid down in the early warning letters sent to the host institutes in June 2010, is meant to assist this process of adjusting staff levels to match available funding.

2010 Financial development update

The forecast for 2010 indicated that the outcome of the year can result in a loss of about 1 MSEK. If that becomes the outcome, the shortage needs to be covered from own reserves. At the time of the forecast, the operating plans from affiliates such as France and Ukraine plans covering the final months of the year were still unknown.

Budget 2011

Council adopted the budget for 2011. The budget volume amounts to 29 MSEK, 3 565 hours (whereof 300 passive hours) and 20.6 staff years.

Inflationary compensation of Associate Contributions

The Associates agreed to consider a 1.9% inflationary compensation of the regular contributions for 2012. The Associates will inform the Executives latest in spring 2011 about their ability to increase the annual contribution in 2012. The responses will be incorporated in the first draft of the 2012 budget.

Five-years plan and balancing

Council noted the ongoing five-years balancing work while taking into that the inflationary compensation would be included earliest in 2012 (and not in 2011 as outlined in the documents).

EISCAT_3D project status

The preparatory phase project started 1 October 2010. The kick-off meeting was held in Stockholm 21-22 October.

Scientific presentation

Dr. Mervyn Freeman, from the British Antarctic Survey, elaborated on *EISCAT and BAS – new opportunities*.

EISCAT History

Prof A. Brekke had been in contact with some people involved in the early years of EISCAT and the individuals agreed to provide written inputs for the continued history work. A potential writer was also identified. In addition, work should commence at Headquarters to organise the paper archive such that material can be found and extracted. The goal will be to have a thirty years history book available in time for 26 August, which was the inauguration date in 1981. It is also considered to have a festivity dinner Friday 26 August 2011, potentially on Svalbard, where EISCAT staff and a selected group of distinguished persons would be invited.

Council Chairperson change

The two year term of the present Council Chairperson, Dr. K. Kauristie, Finland, will be completed by the of the year. The next Chairperson will be Dr. T. Andersson, Sweden.

Council agreed that the new Vice-Chairperson will come from P. R. of China. The Chinese delegation will name the individual before 31 December 2010.

Next meetings

The 76th meeting will be held 31 May – 1 June 2011 in Helsinki, Finland.

The 77th meeting will be held 3 – 4 November 2011 in Bonn, Germany.

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