

**Short Report from the 78th meeting of the EISCAT Council
Held 29 – 30 May, 2012 at the
Nordic Light Hotel, Stockholm, Sweden**

Present: Dr. A. Aikio, Finland, Dr. T. Andersson, Sweden (Chairperson), Prof. A. Brekke, Norway, Prof. Q. Dong, P. R. of China, Prof. J. Gumbel, Sweden, Dr. B. Jacobsen, Norway, Dr. K. Kauristie, Finland, Dr. L. Lønnum, Norway, 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 (Vice-Chairperson)

Invited: Prof. Cesar La Hoz, SOC Chairperson

In Attendance: Mr. H. Andersson, Head of Administration, Dr. I. Mann, Head of Projects and Dr. E. Turunen, Director, all from Headquarters

Association and Associates

Germany left the Association at the end of 2011. German scientists can still have access to the systems via peer-review. The national initiatives regarding EISCAT_3D were summarised. The new system is already in the national roadmaps in Sweden and Norway and work is ongoing to have EISCAT_3D included in the Finnish, UK and Japan ones. P. R. of China has the Svalbard extension in the current national five-year plan. Funding for a mainland system upgrade can earliest be included in the thirteenth five-years plan: 2016-2021. Council decided on the next steps in the new Director recruitment process. The agreement rewriting group summarised their views and the understanding is that the current EISCAT Agreement will only need smaller modifications to fit with the needs arising due to the new EISCAT_3D system. Council decided in 2010 to assign 10 kEUR annually for support for the regularly occurring radar school. The sum is for local organising and teachers travel. Some teachers are usually EISCAT staff and Council was asked to clarify whether the travel cost for these should be included in this sum or not. Council agreed that EISCAT staff travel would be budgeted separately.

Systems status

The Sodankylä operation was effectively put out of operation in November of last year when a Finnish mobile operator started to use a newly deployed GSM base station 6.1 km away from the site and thus effectively blocking the UHF frequency band from then on. Work is ongoing to convert the Kiruna and Sodankylä antennas to VHF use such that tristatic operations will be possible again. This conversion involves mainly replacing the sub-reflector with a new 224 MHz ring-design and some new electronics. The installation will be done summer 2012. In spring a gear-box breakdown occurred in the Svalbard 32 meter antenna. Repair work is ongoing and pricing for a new gear-box have been received. The plan is to have the fault fixed before the coming winter.

New system developments

The already agreed ordering of the pre-study for a VHF transmitter replacement work had not been done since, after further discussions, this work will require more resources than first envisaged. Council agreed, since the overall cost would become

an issue if deciding to go ahead with the full plan, that some of the work could be done in-house and that the needed external tasks should be de-scoped such that the total pre-study consultancy would not cost more than 700 kSEK. Some other proposed new system developments were discussed but Council abstained from making any decisions.

Operations

The 32 meter antenna fault creates problems for users wanting to run scanning experiments. All other systems and modes have worked well. Four peer-review applications were received for the 1 May deadline.

EISCAT_3D preparatory phase project status

The preparatory phase (EISCAT_3D_2) project management will submit the first periodic report covering the initial 18 months of the project. Some delays in the project were reported.

Proposal to build a third antenna on Svalbard

A positive reply regarding the build permit have been received and also a transmit licence for the S-band (3.23 GHz) is in place. The next steps will be to establish the project management and the detailed technical design.

Closing the Annual Report of the Accounts 2011

Council closed the Annual Report of the Accounts 2011.

2012 Financial development update

The forecast for 2012 indicated a negative result of around 700 kSEK. Council discussed ways to cover this possible shortage.

Budget 2013

Council noted the draft budget document.

Five years plan: 2013-2017

The later years in the five years plan caused concern. Remedy actions will potentially be needed after 2013. Such activities would though probably coincide in time with the envisaged construction start of the new EISCAT_3D system meaning that resources could be reallocated from the regular operations to planning and construction work.

Scientific presentation

It was agreed to not have any presentation at this meeting.

Next meetings

The 79th meeting will be held 31 October – 1 November, 2012, in Qingdao. P. R. of China.

The 80th meeting will be held in Norway around end-May – early-June, 2013.

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