

OTC Meeting, Tuesday, June 8th 2004 (Minutes Rev 2004-06-10)
17:00 UTC (10:00 Tuc, 11:00 Soc, 13:00 CV & GB)
Call-in (NTC-200 Hub): 434-984-0244

Agenda:

1. OTC Membership
2. Follow up on Research Engineer issues, and relation to Miller's Scientific Staff Policy draft
3. Follow up on last meeting's action list
Please see minutes at
http://www.tuc.nrao.edu/~demerson/otc/otc_2004-04-16.pdf
Please see also Tony Kerr's email of today [Repeated below]
4. New Action List
5. Next meeting
6. Any other business

Present:

Barry Clark, Larry D'Addario, Darrel Emerson, Rick Fisher,
Tony Kerr, Peter Napier, Art Symmes & John Webber.

1. Membership.

Art Symmes was welcomed as a new member of the OTC, replacing Lee King; Art brings to the group particular expertise in the area of mechanical engineering.

2. Research Engineer and the Scientific Staff Policy draft document

The draft Scientific Staff Policy (SSP) document (dated 5/17/2004) had earlier been given to the OTC by Miller Goss. (Miller had been invited to this OTC meeting, but is traveling and unable to attend.) There is some similarity in that SSP document's section V concerning "Scientist Track" positions, and the OTC's own recommendation to Fred Lo (see <http://www.tuc.nrao.edu/~demerson/otc/recommendation1.pdf>) on the creation of Research Engineer and Senior Research Engineer positions. However, there are also differences. In particular, the SSP document called for a performance review of all personnel holding scientific positions by a scientific review committee; engineering personnel should be reviewed by an engineering panel. The OTC recommendation envisions two grades (Senior Research Engineer and Research Engineer), while the SSP describes 3 appointments (Assistant Scientist, Associate Scientist and Scientist).

The OTC discussed whether the existing SSP draft could be modified to take into account the OTC's proposal, either by modifying the SSP section V, or by inserting an extra section (a new section VI) that specifically describes the Research Engineer positions. The council was split over these preferences, although there were no very strong feelings either way. Some NRAO employees might prefer to have "scientist" in their title, while others might prefer "engineer."

It was decided to create a tentative new section in the SSP document, which would then help clarify whether or not the existing section V of the SSP could or could not be modified to incorporate the engineer options. John Webber volunteered to draft the new section. Darrel volunteered to pass on the essence of this discussion to Miller Goss. Darrel will also ask Bob D'Angio for a list of NRAO engineers who might be affected by these classifications; at a later stage these engineers could be canvassed for opinions.

3. Follow up on the **Action List from our previous meeting:**

Tony Kerr discussed **prioritization of projects** along with the associated long term budget planning. Tony has assigned specific OTC members to look at particular parts of the text and budgets, to ask for updates. Peter expressed concern that, given the current budget situation, this might turn into a futile exercise. However, it was thought to be useful to have such a document available in any case; it might even inspire some initiative to get additional funding from somewhere.

There was some short discussion on the email from Jim Ulvestad (13 May 2004) about whether we could set up a mechanism to feed some university-trained experimentalists into NRAO after their graduation. It was considered that this would be a natural outcome of increasing emphasis on collaboration between NRAO staff and the universities; such collaboration is to be encouraged in any case.

SKA: a formal SKA document is now available in NRAO libraries, and probably on the web too. The reference to this document will be sent to OTC members.

4. **New Action List:**

John Webber will create a tentative draft new section for the SSP, describing the Research Engineer positions. Darrel will inform Miller of the OTC discussion and activity in this area, and obtain a list of NRAO engineers potentially affected by any changes in this area.

Tony Kerr will distribute suggested names for those responsible for updating the different categories of the future project and budget planning documents.

John W. will write some words for possible alternative funding options.

5. **Next meeting:**

As already agreed, the next OTC teleconference is planned for July 13th, at 13:00 UTC. Darrel will attempt to be more timely in sending out reminders and the agenda for that meeting.

6. **Any Other Business:**

There was none.

Notes by DTE.

Appendix:

Email from Tony Kerr to OTC, 2004-06-08

Subject: Engineering Research Plan
From: Anthony Kerr <akerr@nrao.edu>
Date: Tue, 08 Jun 2004 00:19:37 -0400
To: Darrel Emerson <demerson@nrao.edu>
CC: bclark@nrao.edu, rfisher@nrao.edu, "Larry D'Addario" <ldaddari@nrao.edu>, Brian Glendenning <bglenden@nrao.edu>, jpayne@nrao.edu, Peter Napier <pnapier@nrao.edu>, rsramek@nrao.edu, athomps@nrao.edu, jwebber@nrao.edu, asymmes@nrao.edu

I don't know whether we'll get to this in today's OTC meeting, but at the April 16 meeting, I was assigned the following task:

> ...lead effort on reprioritization of the research topics in our earlier OTC document. Everyone should send Tony suggestions on priorities and additions...

So far, I have only received comments from Rick. His (and my) comments are shown in blue in the appropriate subsections of section 4.6 of the AUI 5-year plan, which has not yet been otherwise modified -- see <ftp://ftp.cv.nrao.edu/NRAO-staff/akerr/hdn/NRAOtechDev.ark02.pdf>

A summary of the budget & manpower spreadsheet is at <ftp://ftp.cv.nrao.edu/NRAO-staff/akerr/hdn/aibudget5.ark1.pdf> -- the non-baseline items are shown in brown.

I notice that the projects listed as top priority (/Baseline/) projects in the text of the 5-year plan are somewhat different from those marked /Baseline/ in the budget spreadsheet. If there are any more suggestions for changes, please send them to me before I do a revised version of the plan and the spreadsheet.

Regards,

--Tony.