

SWG Chairs Telecon 17-March-2020

Participants: SWGs: Jason Hessels, Phil Edwards, Mark Sargent, George Heald, Adriano Ingallinera , Fernando Camilo, Francoise Combes, Sebastien Mueller, Izsaskun Jimenez-Serra, Paolo Serra, Natasha Hurley-Walker, Sarah Blyth, Eduard Kontar, Abhirup Datta, Valentina Vacca, Stefano Camera

Apologies: Doug Johnstone, Andrei Mesinger

SKAO: Robert Braun, Jeff Wagg, Tyler Bourke, Evan Keane, Anna Bonaldi, Philippa Hartley

*Topic: Countdown to Construction*

RB: On slide 2 is a summary of what has been going on recently

RB: We had the CPTF meeting on Feb 5/6 who recommended that we go ahead and plan to build the Design Baseline. This has subsequently been confirmed by the SKA Board who met on Feb 28. Next, we will have an Observatory Plan Review on March 23 and 24. Following this we expect to close out the System CDR by the end of March.

Finally, we will have two Webinars to communicate the Construction and Operation Plans to the science and engineering community. This will provide an opportunity for everyone to ask questions and the two slots are an attempt to cater to different time zones around the planet. There will be a need to register as we are currently limited to 500 listeners per session in Webinar mode. If the demand should exceed this, we can upgrade our license.

RB: Moving on to slide 4, this is a quote summarising the Board Meeting outcome; directing the SKAO to write Construction and Observatory Proposals based on the Design Baseline. Just to remind you what that means, the next slide summarizes these capabilities.

P Serra: We would like some clarification as to the role of the Cost Saving Ladder, does it have any role in drafting the proposal? Are we starting from scratch?

RB: Let me start by saying the whole term 'Deployment Baseline' is now retired. The only purpose of the list might be to provide some guidance when defining milestones and gates within construction contracts that are designed to deliver the full Design Baseline scope. In many ways you are correct, we are starting from scratch.

P Serra: My understanding is that it is likely things will happen in a staged manner but that you are not just taking the list at face value and running with it? I think it makes sense what you said.

J Hessels: The Design Baseline is the intention, but it requires additional funding to be found?

RB: I would not phrase it like that. The email I sent to the full SWG list summarizes the directive from the CPTF and Board. They want us to plan for delivery and operation of the

full scope of the project. They recognize that it is their responsibility to identify the funds to enable this. Our job is to be excited about the great scientific prospects of the Observatory. This would strengthen the resolve of member governments to commit the necessary funding.

RB: The next piece of news is that it was impossible to get a sufficiently large block hotel booking in Stellenbosch, even with 12 months lead time. The largest block booking is 50 rooms, which is not enough to feel comfortable with for our likely participant numbers. We are now looking at central Cape Town. There is a good main venue with availability for March 2021, when we hope the world will be back to normal. One very important question for which we need your feedback, is the preferred format. Would you prefer 3 (science) + 2 (KSP), or something different? The main venue is a theatre downtown and we are looking at breakout sessions at a nearby location such as a large hotel. Please let me know your thoughts on the optimum mix of session types.

F Combes: It would be ideal to have a plenary in the morning and a workshop in the afternoon. Otherwise, some may come just for the first three days and then leave for the breakouts.

RB: I agree, and we will explore this option. The theatre is flexible as they are generally unoccupied during the day.

E. Kontar: You mentioned breakouts which I assume means the same format as last time, ie around KSPs. We might consider that if there are 350 participants we should have parallel science topic sessions to promote discussion. This would allow for some cross-fertilization between working groups.

J Hessels: I agree that mixing the breakout with the plenary would be a good idea.

V Vacca: This sounds good and it worked during our LOFAR Magnetism Key Science meeting.

RB: Great, we will explore the morning plenary/afternoon parallel session approach more fully. That's it for me. Anything that you would like share:

P Serra: Any update on the next data challenge

A Bonaldi: We are working on preparing the simulated data and how to deliver the challenge to the participants given that it is a very large cube. We may put the data on clusters where the participants can process the data locally rather than downloading it. Considering everything we could aim for the summer. We now have some preliminary model cubes prior to adding noise and sampling effects and we will do some more sanity checks, so it would be useful if some people from the HI working group could inspect a small test cube and let us know if there are any issues with the data. Paolo, would anyone from your group be free to help with this?

P Serra: Absolutely, you can count on us.

A Bonaldi: Great, thank you very much. Probably in a couple of weeks.

RB: To give you an idea of the size of the test data, probably 1000x1000x3500 pixels.

S Blyth: We should be able to handle this.

J Hessels: regarding the webinars, when should we expect registration to open?

R Braun: This will happen soon. Our IT team will do this and there will be an email to everyone.

S. Mueller: These will be live? Will they also be recorded?

RB: Yes, they will be live and we can post the recordings.

M Sargent: A few telecons ago we mentioned that there are ongoing discussions around commensality. We will give an update on this very soon. Also, roughly half a year ago we assigned SWG representatives to the SRC steering committee. What is happening with this?

RB: I will ask Rosie and get back to you.

JW: The science case for going beyond band 5 has now been published as a memo and we would like to thank all of you who contributed to this. The memo is available here so feel free to distribute it among your groups:

<https://www.skatelescope.org/memos/>