

Observing at ESO: a New Procedure for Target and Instrument Set-up Changes

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As stated in the ESO Call for Proposals, targets and constraints requested at time of proposal submission (i.e. at Phase 1) are binding, because once the proposals have been evaluated by the Observing Proposal Committee, the requested targets and constraints become one of the major inputs to finalise and optimise the scheduling of the telescopes. However, part of the success of an observatory comes also from the ability to balance operational efficiency (hence rules and procedures) and scientific return. In other words, target and/or instrument set-up changes are allowed also after Phase 1, but only after they have been carefully scrutinised. Their approval is subject to the following conditions:

- all requests must be accompanied by a sound and robust scientific justification;
- no conflict is found with already approved (thus protected) targets/set-ups from other programmes;
- the impact on the telescope schedule due to the requested change is insignificant.

Until recently, requests for target/set-up changes/additions were handled manually, via the submission of an e-mail to the observatories (for Visitor Mode runs), to the User Support Department (for Service Mode runs), sometimes even via an e-mail to private accounts. In order to have a better overview of the requests and properly log them in one central place, we have now developed and deployed a new web-based form for the submission of these requests, which is available at <http://www.eso.org/observing/p2pp/ProgChange/>.

As for other services we provide (e.g. Service Mode run status progress report pages), access to the form requires a P2PP (Phase 2 Preparation tool) password and valid run ID, and the selection between a target or an instrument set-up change. Once the user and the run are verified, the list of the Phase 1 targets is displayed and a few fields need to be filled out: a scientific/technical justification in support of the request; coordinates of the new targets or the newly requested instrument set-up. If the change request is for targets, users also need to specify a target type, to be chosen among: REPL = replacement (when they wish to discard and replace one or more of their Phase 1 targets); ADDI =

additional (if they want to add new targets, but please note that additional targets does not mean additional time); BACK = back-up (when observations of the main science targets may be at risk due to specific atmospheric conditions – this applies only to Visitor Mode runs). At time of submission, the requester receives an acknowledgement message, and later on the official answer with the approval or rejection of (or part of) the request. Response time may vary, depending on the urgency of the request.

The form was publicly released on 3 July 2007 (announced under the “What’s New” section of the USD P2PP public web page), simultaneously with the start of the Phase 2 preparation for Period 80. After a smooth transition period for Service Mode runs, the new procedure for target/set-up change requests is now in place also for Visitor Mode runs, as reflected in the Paranal and La Silla Science Operations pages for Visiting Astronomers (http://www.eso.org/paranal/sciops/vm_backup.html and <http://www.ls.eso.org/lasilla/sciops/>). We are still working on the form and small changes in its appearance will certainly appear in the coming semesters, because it is only with experience that possible shortcomings can be identified.

Personnel Movements

Arrivals (1 July–30 September 2007)

Europe	
de Zeeuw, Pieter Timotheus (NL)	Director General
Döllinger, Michaela (D)	Fellow
Hansen, Camilla Juul (DK)	Student
Hinterschuster, Renate (D)	Draughtswoman
Jochum, Lieselotte (D)	System Engineer/Physicist
Korhonen, Heidi Helena (FIN)	Fellow
Lind, Karin (S)	Student
Raiter, Anna (PL)	Student
Russo, Pedro Miguel (P)	Paid Astronomer
van Belle, Gerard (USA)	Instrument Scientist
Ventimiglia, Giulia (I)	Student
Vera Sequeiros, Ignacio (ES)	Software Engineer/Database Design

Chile

Bensby, Thomas Lennart (S)	Fellow
Carraro, Giovanni (I)	Operations Astronomer
Garcia-Appadoo, Diego Alex (ES)	Fellow
Gutierrez, Adriana (RCH)	Administrative Assistant
Rabanus, David (D)	Telescope Scientist
Saavedra, Marcia (RCH)	Personnel Officer
Sanzana, Lilian (RCH)	Software Engineer
West, Michael (USA)	Senior Astronomer

Departures (1 July–30 September 2007)

Europe	
Bik, Adrianus (NL)	Fellow
Fedele, Davide (I)	Student
Harrison, Paul (GB)	Software Engineer
Jordán, Andrés (RCH)	Fellow
Kainulainen, Jouni (FIN)	Student
Messineo, Maria (I)	Fellow
Parker, Laura (CDN)	Fellow
Rzepecki, Jaroslaw P. (PL)	Student
Schuhler, Nicolas (F)	Optical Engineer
Silva Smiljanic, Rodolfo (BR)	Student
Thebaud, Nathalie (F)	Secretary/Assistant
Valenti, Stefano (I)	Student
Villegas Mansilla, Daniela (RCH)	Student
Zilio, Davide (I)	Student

Chile

Anciaux, Michel (B)	Engineer
Caruso, Fabio (I)	Instrumentation Engineer
Demartis, Walter (I)	Personnel Officer
Elliott, David (GB)	Student
Galliano, Emmanuel (F)	Fellow
Papadaki, Christina (GR)	Student