

ESO is the European Organisation for Astronomical Research in the Southern Hemisphere. Whilst the Headquarters (comprising the scientific, technical and administrative centre of the organisation) are located in Garching near Munich, Germany, ESO operates three observational sites in the Chilean Atacama desert. The Very Large Telescope (VLT), is located on Paranal, a 2 600 m high mountain south of Antofagasta. At La Silla, 600 km north of Santiago de Chile at 2 400 m altitude, ESO operates several medium-sized optical telescopes. The third site is the 5 000 m high Llano de Chajnantor, near San Pedro de Atacama. Here a new submillimetre telescope (APEX) is in operation, and a giant array of 12-m submillimetre antennas (ALMA) is under development. Over 1600 proposals are made each year for the use of the ESO telescopes.

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Front Cover Picture: The southern barred spiral galaxy NGC 1313. Active star formation is evident from the presence of many H II region nebulae which surround clusters of young hot stars, including Wolf-Rayet stars (see article on page 53). This colour-composite (ESO Press Photo 43/06) is based on images obtained with the VLT FORS1 instrument.

Corrigendum: In the June issue of the Messenger (No. 128), the caption (back page, page 80) to the front cover image wrongly described the configuration of two of the three ALMA antennas. The European (AEC Consortium) antenna is in fact the one on the left and the US (Vertex RSI) antenna the one in the middle. In addition the photograph was by Herbert Zodet (ESO).