

News from the ESO Science Archive Facility

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The latest developments from the ESO archive are presented. Information is provided to the astronomical community on new data releases and services.

Blu-ray discs for data distribution

The new Blu-ray disc technology will be introduced mid-2009 in the Science Archive Facility. Besides FTP transfer for small volumes of data, the archive is currently offering its users the following media for data distribution: CD, DVD-R, and USB discs for data requests larger than 60 GB. The reasons for the change are the adoption of the most economical technologies and the adaption to larger data volumes. A Blu-ray disc has about ten times the capacity of a single-layer DVD. With the introduction of the Blu-ray discs, the archive will stop offering CDs as an archive data distribution medium. Therefore, archive users anticipating large data requests and Principal Investigators (PIs) expecting significant data deliveries from their observing programmes are advised to make sure that they have Blu-ray disc readers available.

New query forms

Besides the general archive query form that gives unified access to the complete ESO collection of raw data, the Science Archive Facility also offers several instrument specific and technically oriented access points for astronomers who are already familiar with ESO instrument setups and observing strategies. Two new instrument specific query forms¹ have been released: one for AMBER (near-infrared instrument of the VLT Interferometer) raw data and one for HAWK-I (near-infrared wide field imager) raw data.

The database of ambient conditions for the Paranal and La Silla observatory sites has been extended to include weather information from the APEX observatory site. The APEX weather station is located



Figure 1. A view of part of the ESO Data Centre where the ESO Science Archive is stored and accessed.

on a free-standing 6-metre high tower located about 50 m west of the APEX telescope and data are recorded every minute. APEX weather data, beginning 1 January 2007, are available from the archive² and can be searched by date interval, or any meteorological parameter such as temperature, humidity, wind speed/direction or precipitable water vapour.

New data releases

Several major scientific data releases have taken place through the ESO archive over the last months and are summarised here. The 30 Doradus raw data taken during the HAWK-I commissioning phase were released in December 2008 and the raw data from the AMBER/FINITO/UTs science verification were released in October 2008. The second release (DR2) of advanced data products from the zCOSMOS redshift survey (Lilly et al., 2008) took place in October 2008. It contains the results of the zCOSMOS-bright spectroscopic observations that were carried out with VIMOS in service mode during the period April 2005 to June 2006.

Faster access to raw proprietary data

The modification of the archive systems and interfaces to allow PIs to request their own raw proprietary data and the

introduction of the automatic data transfer through the network from Paranal to Garching (Zampieri et al., 2008) has led to significantly improved data delivery services. PIs, can now access their own raw data, in most cases only a few hours after the observations have completed.

Contact

For more information about the ESO archive, or to subscribe to the archive RSS feed to be informed about the latest archive developments, see the archive web page³.

For any questions or comments on the ESO archive, contact us at archive@eso.org.

References

- Lilly, S. et al. 2008, *The Messenger*, 134, 35
Zampieri, S. et al. 2008, to appear in ASP Conf. Proc. ADASS XVIII

Notes

- ¹ <http://archive.eso.org/cms/eso-data/instrument-specific-query-forms>
² http://archive.eso.org/wdb/wdb/eso/meteo_apex/form
³ <http://archive.eso.org/>