

47th Directing Board Ersatz Meeting I – Minutes

Location: 2-hour Zoom meeting
Date: 7 September 2022
Note taker: Dirk Behrend
Version history: 27 December 2022

Attending Board members: Rüdiger Haas (Chair), Dirk Behrend, Johannes Böhm, Patrick Charlot, Alet de Witt, John Gipson, David Hall, Hayo Hase, Nancy Kotary, Chet Ruszczyk, Nadia Shuygina, Yu Takagi, Oleg Titov, Gino Tuccari, Stuart Weston.

Excused: Pablo de Vicente, Anastasiia Girdiuk.

1. Welcome and approval of agenda

Rüdiger Haas welcomed the attending Board members. The Board approved the agenda for the ersatz meeting.

2. Situation at Warkworth

Auckland University of Technology (AUT) was reviewing the continued support of the VLBI Station at Warkworth. An overarching problem was the funding shortage that the university suffered in the wake of the Covid-19 pandemic (i.e., lack of foreign students). There was the possibility of other parties/ministries providing financial support (e.g., Land Information New Zealand, LINZ). AUT planned to make a decision on the future of Warkworth by September 16. Rüdiger sent a letter of support from the IVS. [After the Board meeting, AUT decided to divest itself of Warkworth Observatory by mid-December. A consortium was formed among several government agencies to evaluate a possible transfer of the asset. Three operators were given six-months contracts with interim funding for continued operations during the deliberation period.]

3. ITRF2020: Certificates – Publications – Documentation

The certificates of contribution to ITRF2020 were done. The next step was to distribute them to the various groups. The IVS Combination Center sent a paper for the IVS contribution to the IERS. In addition, a documentation update with a five-page description was sent for the IERS website (<https://itrf.ign.fr/en/solutions/ITRF2020>).

4. Task Force on VLBI scale drift

The Task Force was established but there was no activity yet. John will send out an invite to the Task Force. The scale drift will be a topic at the Unified Analysis Workshop in October.

5. Activities of IVS CRF Committee

The Celestial Reference Frame (CRF) Committee commenced its activities in October 2020 and was led by Alet de Witt (Chair) and Oleg Titov (Co-Chair) for two years. During that period the committee met virtually six times. The committee members looked into the status of the S/X CRF and observing programs, the performance of astrometric sessions, plans for continued S/X CRF observing, imaging, source flux densities, source lists, and the VGOS CRF. The Board approved the re-election of Alet as CRF Committee Chair and the election of Megan Johnson as Co-Chair. There are no changes to the general membership of the committee.

6. VGOS frequencies and the ITU

The International Telecommunication Union (ITU) Working Party (WP 7D) was expected to approve a Report on geodetic VLBI at its meeting in Geneva, Switzerland, on September 28. [This did happen and the report was published as Report ITU-R RA.2507-0 (10/2022), https://www.itu.int/dms_pub/itu-r/opb/rep/R-REP-RA.2507-2022-PDF-E.pdf.]

The fixing of VGOS frequency bands would be beneficial for frequency protection purposes as well as creating dedicated source catalogs. In the VTC, a subgroup on RFI was formed looking into technical solutions for mitigation; the subgroup is led by L. Hilliard.

7. VGOS correlation backlog / turnaround time

Some stations were running out of disk space, as the turnaround time for VGOS 24-hour sessions was between two and four months. The origin of the backlog stems from the bandwidth available for data transport and the priorities for the various transfers. Chet was working on a report; to reduce the backlog, either more correlators or more bandwidth was needed. A stopgap measure would be the reduction of the VO session observing cadence.

8. VGOS development plan

Rüdiger will add points, which came up in recent months, to the current version of the plan. After the update, he will send the new version around for further feedback.

9. VGOS level-1 memo

The data center at BKG requested a document to ask for additional funding to buy large disks for an increased storage capacity.

10. DB elections, Election Committee

The next Directing Board elections will be held in November/December 2022. The Board formed the Election Committee consisting of David Hall (Chair), Dirk Behrend, and Nancy Kotary.

11. UAW delegates

The Unified Analysis Workshop is a three-day event. There will be four hours of presentations for the IVS. The delegates for the IVS include John Gipson, Rüdiger Haas, Benedikt Soja, Hendrik Hellmers, Minghui Xu, and Guangli Wang.

12. Planning of future meetings

a. IVS retreat, next board meeting

The Board agreed to hold an IVS Retreat in conjunction with the EVGA meeting in June 2023. Possible venue is the Stadthalle in Bad Kötzing, Germany. Rüdiger will check with the local organizers of the EVGA on logistics.

b. 25th anniversary of IVS, in 2024 Tsukuba

There was no activity yet. The preparations should start about a year before the event.

13. Miscellaneous

None.