

schedule is very small (typically a few programs per semester), even these could be avoided if proposers find targets in less demanded RA's (see Alves & Lombardi 2004).

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ALMA NEWS

TOM WILSON, EUROPEAN SOUTHERN OBSERVATORY

THE CURRENT STATUS OF THE ANTENNA PROCUREMENT

Presently the ALMA antenna procurement process is being delayed until further tests of the prototype antennas in Socorro NM, USA are finished. These tests involve some astronomical measurements, so winter is the most favorable time period. Once the tests are finished the results will be evaluated and a decision about the choice of ALMA antenna will be made. As all should understand, great caution is needed in reaching this decision, since the ALMA antennas will be the largest single investment in the project.

ESAC MEMBERS

From January 2005, José Cernicharo has become the Spanish member of the European Science Advisory Committee (ESAC). He replaces Rafael Bachiller. The names of the other national members are to be found at the web site <http://www.eso.org/projects/alma/newsletter/almanews2/ESAC>.

THE PRESENT STATUS OF THE ALMA REGIONAL CENTER

The concept of the ALMA Regional Center (ARC) for Europe has been discussed by the European Science Advisory Committee (ESAC) in September 2003. This discussion is summarized in an appendix to the ESAC report. After further discussions within the European ALMA Board, the STC and ESO Council, the ESO Council approved a "Call for Expressions of Interest", with the request to submit letters of intent by 31 October 2004. Seven replies have been received. These will be discussed in a face-to-face meeting at ESO in early 2005 with the groups involved. Thus progress is being made on the organization of ARCs, and we will provide more details in future issues of *The Messenger*.

For those interested in the background, the ARC functions are divided into "User Support", which is funded within the ALMA project, and "Science Support" which is not a part of the basic ALMA funding plan. Recent accounts of the "User Support" are to be found at the web site: http://www.eso.org/projects/alma/meetings/gar-sep04/Silva_Community_Garching.pdf

http://www.eso.org/projects/alma/meetings/gar-sep04/Silva_Community_Garching.pdf

For a description of "Science Support", see the web site http://www.eso.org/projects/alma/meetings/gar-sep04/Wilson_Community_Garching.pdf

For other presentations of functions given at the ALMA Community Day, see <http://www.eso.org/projects/alma/meetings/gar-sep04/>

UPCOMING EVENTS

There will be a workshop entitled "SZ Effect and ALMA" on 7–8 April 2005, at Orsay, in the Paris area. For further information and registration, email Pierre.Cox@ias.u-psud.fr

Planning has been started for a "Global ALMA Meeting" to be held in Madrid in 2006. This will be the first world-wide ALMA science meeting since the Washington DC meeting in 1999. The local organization of the meeting will be headed by Rafael Bachiller (OAN), while the scientific organization will be led by the Alma Scientific Advisory Committee.



View at the ALMA site on the Zona de Chajnantor. The APEX antenna is visible in front of the Cerro Chajnantor.