

us to recruit and train the staff required to operate effectively the VLT.

To achieve these goals it is difficult to see how the level of personnel and expenditure at La Silla can be reduced in the foreseeable future.

3.2 Scientific Staff

I have mentioned in several instances the apparent lack of scientific input in several of the most important activities of ESO. This may be in part due to a policy of separation between the Science Division and the VLT project and the La Silla Operations.

I hold the view that an enterprise such as VLT cannot be done without the enthusiastic commitment of a first-rate scientific staff. My concept is that all astronomers at ESO should be required to both do service and carry out their own research. A review of each scientist commitment to service has been under-

taken and it is clear that little more can be squeezed out of the current staff complement. I therefore believe that a vigorous campaign to attract and retain first-rate scientists is essential. Furthermore, the very mechanisms for hiring and promotions must be rearranged in order to give the scientists as a whole a feeling of involvement and responsibility in the improvement of the situation.

I have started treating the scientists as a faculty and I will insist that they take on the task of self-improvement. This could be very greatly aided by the creation of a Visiting Committee of distinguished scientists from both within and outside ESO member states to examine the overall scientific health of the organization. Council has in principle approved this concept.

I also believe that it is important to more deeply and broadly engage the European astronomical community in planning the scientific programme to be

carried out by VLT/VLTI. This is necessary to more clearly focus ESO's priorities in the many trade-offs which occur during the development phase of the programme and to permit the efficient scientific use of the facility during operations.

4. Final Remarks

In my report to Council, I also included a very provisional assessment of the need to achieve optimal operations at La Silla and Paranal. We are now looking into a number of approaches to achieve this result and will be guided by the La Silla priorities' study. At the same time, I am taking steps to change the pyramidal managerial structure which I have found at ESO and which I consider unsuited to carry out the variety of complex activities which ESO has undertaken.

Relations Between the Republic of Chile and ESO

In 1963, the Government of the Republic of Chile and ESO concluded a Treaty (Spanish: Convenio) which has formed the basis for the formal relationship between the signatories during the past three decades.

Recently, two issues were raised by the Chilean side which implied important changes in the established Treaty relations between ESO and the Republic of Chile. The first concerned the access of Chilean astronomers to ESO facilities at this organization's astronomical observatory and the second the question of labour relations between ESO and its employees of Chilean nationality.

In 1992/1993, a joint Chile/ESO Committee with representatives from the Chilean Ministry of Foreign Affairs on one side and the ESO Executive and Council on the other side was constituted to look into these matters. The joint Committee met in Santiago de Chile on April 19 and 20, 1993. During these negotiations, ESO proposed that the Republic of Chile might become a full member of the organization. Both sides emphasized the efficient and mutually respectful interaction during the past 30 years and their wish to achieve an acceptable solution which would ensure ESO's continued activities in the Republic of Chile.

Later in April, the Chamber of Deputies (one of the chambers of the Chilean Parliament; the other is the Senate) adopted a resolution formulated by the Commission for Foreign Affairs of the Chamber of Deputies, which

formally requested the Government of Chile to re-negotiate the 1963 Treaty with ESO and also mentioned the possibility that the Chilean Government could make use of its right to revoke this Treaty.

ESO was preoccupied by this development after thirty years of smooth collaboration with the Chilean Government and the Chilean astronomical community, taking also into account its considerable investment in Chile. The revocation of a host state agreement with an international organization would have constituted an extreme precedent in international cooperation between states and international organizations.

During the recent meeting of the ESO Council in Florence on June 2-3, 1993, the relations between ESO and Chile were thoroughly discussed. Council also gave specific instructions concerning the various aspects of the future scientific and technological cooperation to the high-level ESO delegation which participated in the next meeting of the joint Committee, which took place in Santiago de Chile from June 18 to 22. As a result of this meeting, a Joint Press Release by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Chile and the European Southern Observatory, was issued in Chile on June 23, 1993 (Spanish text) and from the ESO Headquarters (Germany) on June 24, 1993 (English text). The English text of this Press Release is given hereafter.

The Editor