

OSC Meeting minutes: 2026-05-22

Present:

Chair: Jan-Erik Sundgren (**JES**)
Per-Erik Opseth (**PEO**)
Michiel van Haarlem (**MvH**)
Elvire de Beck (**EdB**)
Olga Botner (**OB**) – remote
John Conway (**JC**)
Vincent Desmaris (**VD**)

1. Adoption of the agenda 09:00-09:05 Chair

Agenda adopted.

2. Minutes/actions of previous meeting 09:35-09:10 Chair

See slides, addition notes below

AI-2025-1-3: On **JC** to set up a file area in Indico to share documents within the OSC. Not yet done

AI-2025-1-17- To work on new long term strategy after VR result, not yet done, **JES** suggest spending more time at coming OSC meetings to discuss strategy and thus restructuring the meetings (having documents sent earlier and only focusing on questions on those) as well as increasing the number of meetings per year from 2 to 3.

AI –2025-2-5. Arrange visit of LM Director to Chalmers. A meeting with Lantmäteriet Director is planned for 3rd September with possible attendance of PEO, to discuss LM's strategy for OSO.

AI- 2025-2-7: Finalize new contract with VR. The final VR budget is in place, only the KPI needs to be finalized. At VR info meetings held about the new grants last autumn it was hinted that VR may wish to have a new Steering group appointed for each period/cycle, John will check. In any case the formal appointment is made by Chalmers and the same members can be re-appointed.

3. Observatory News 09:10-10:10

3.1 New infrastructure host department of Physics and Astronomy from 1st April JC

OSO is since 1st April part of the new Physics and Astronomy department. The organigram remains the same at the National infrastructure and OSO remains a division within the new department

3.2 Summary of staff status (organogram), arrival/departures, staff survey **VD**

See slides. The staff survey results remain good although with the somewhat lower score on leadership (at Chalmers level) being mainly ascribed to the merger of the OSO and AoP division from the SEE department and Physics department into a new Physics and Astronomy department.

3.3 Workshop completion and Rymdrum visitor centre exhibition upgrade **VD**

See slides

3.4 Plans/status for new infrastructure recruitments **JC**

See slides: The two positions related to the tri-band camera will be advertised by the end of May.

3.5 Triband receiver for 20m telescope - project status. **JC**

See slides **JES** points out that it is important to deliver on the tri-band camera on time to eventually get more funding in the future from Hasselblad.

3.6 Future fundraising ideas - i.e.- replacement antenna for 25m, space involvement **JC**

JC suggests looking for a new antenna to be the subject for fundraising.
OSC discussed the relevance of the different frequency ranges covered by the possible antennas.

3.7 GARD ALMA receiver developments+ ESA LETO mission **V**

See slides.

3.8 LOFAR 2.0 upgrade and LOFAR ERIC **JC**

LOFAR 2.0 is currently being rolled out. At the time of the OSC meeting the Onsala LOFAR station installation is ongoing, and first test observations have been performed.

3.9 JIV-ERIC, Consolidation of European Radio Astronomy See Slides. **JC**

3.10 EU proposals with deadline 16th June **JC**

See slides. A proposal for the Infra tech-01-0 call for infrastructure upgrades called AURA involving Geo and receiver activities from OSO, will be submitted by deadline 16th of June, OSO is also involved in the Infra-dev01-03 proposal for e-infrastructure via the CHEER proposal forming links between ALMA, LOFAR and SKA data support.

3.11 SKA status including SRC node **JC**

See slides; **JC** informed that so far no commitment from Sweden has been made to provide the requested additional funds (2.6M€) for SKA construction, with funding still being sought by VR.

3.12 Annual report to VR including user/publication statistics **JC**

See slides. **EdB** and **MvH** advocate for OSO to also include external (non-Swedish) usage of the facility to highlight the importance of the infrastructure for the community (worldwide). **JC** notes these numbers are given in the short report and excel file to VR but were not included in the slides to the OSC for this meeting.

3.13 Recent science results

JC

See slides

4. VR proposal 2027-2030 final outcome

10:10 – 10:30 JC

JC summarizes the situation: after many discussions, combining Chalmers, VR and the Hasselblad foundation the total funding for the coming period 2027 -2030 will be 167 MSEK, which is 7 MSEK higher than asked. The extra 7 MSEK will be likely be absorbed by likely higher inflation than the budgeted value.

JES acknowledge the remarkable work done by John and the rest of the team to achieve these good results.

OSC supports a PR effort highlighting the outcome of the VR applications should be done.

5 OSO Risk register

10:30 – 11:00 JC

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See slides

JES suggest to focus the discussion on the highest identified risk: i.e. Chalmers funding to the infrastructure. A new funding policy from Chalmers to infrastructures is expected to start from 2029. Onsala will have a good opportunity in September with the visit of the Lantmäteriet Director General to increase the awareness that currently Chalmers is not contributing to funding the Geo activities at OSO.

6. Geo activities

11:00 – 12:00 RH/JC

See slides for details.

JES points out that VR does not pay for geodesy, but LM does and argue that one way to increase funding for Onsala would be to increase Chalmers funding to the Geodesy activities, especially in connections to Space.

The issue of academic funding to geoscience was raised. **RuH** mentions that now VR currently only funds one project related to Geodesy (PhD project) while SNSA funds another PhD student for 3 years only.

To increase the visibility towards Chalmers, **RuH**: suggest to use the observatory for education both at Chalmers but also within the suggested Erasmus+ or equivalent programs. This program is hopefully attractive enough and lead to employable persons within the “newspace” area.

JC describes the tentative planning for the visit of the LM director general at Onsala on Sept. 3rd. including visit to the observatory in the morning (looking at telescope, etc...) and meeting with the Rektor in the afternoon. At the Onsala part of our meeting **RuH** will describe our activities, while also have **PEO** or someone external invited.

New AI: 2026-1-1 - JC and RuH to setup a tentative schedule for September 3rd within the coming week and send it to the OSC for comments.

EdB suggests having the Rector also should be present to at the morning meeting to hear about the needs from outside persons. **JC** comments that the Rector schedule does not allow him to visit Onsala in the morning.

PEO suggests to also invite general directors from Nordic countries on Sept 3rd to get extra attention and motivation for the rector to attend the meeting and have a possible follow up meeting in Ny Ålesund in spring 2027, to activate and increase collaborations Geodesy at the Nordic level.

Lunch Break **12:00 - 12:45**

7. New OSO Director recruitment and job advert (closed session) **12:45 – 13:30. Chair**

8. Budget result 2025. **13:30 – 13:50. JC**

This item was run before lunch, since the meeting went ahead schedule. See slides for details. The result is very similar to the adjusted prognosis given to the OSC in October 2025, yet significantly different from the original budget submitted end of 2024. The more positive result compared to the original budget is mainly due to the absence of three budgeted FTE as well as less spending on hardware, **OB** warned that delaying investment is not always a healthy decision.

9. Budget prognosis 2026 **13:50 – 14:00 JC**

This item was run before lunch, since the meeting went ahead schedule. See slides for details. A large loss is expected in 2026, mainly due to non-compensation of depreciation costs for the OTT and lower income from VR as SKA costs ramp up but before OSO gets its new grant from VR in 2027. The overall prognosis is according to the budget, slightly better due to one person leaving the observatory

JES reiterates the need for the steering committee to focus on the strategy related to the sustainability of OSO.

8. Capital, Long term financial prognosis. 2027 budget preparation **14:00 – 14:30 JC**

MvH advocates for clear communication on the risks on the long-term financing of the infrastructure and its Chalmers limited support.

JES intends to bring up in a separate discussion the situation that the OSO director does talk directly to the Rector is a big issue

10. AOB/Next meeting **14:30 - 15:00 JC**

New AI -2026- 1 - JC&VD: set up a doodle for the two more OSC meetings this year. This first extra meeting is to be set in early September soon after the Sept 3rd visit of the Lantmäteriet Director General (physical meeting) focused on strategy with adequate documentation being prepared and distributed beforehand. The second meeting should be at the end of October mainly focused on budget (this meeting could be digital).

15:00 Meeting End