



Minister for Water; Fisheries; Forestry; Innovation and ICT; Science

Our ref: D113921

Committee Secretary
Joint Standing Committee on Treaties
PO Box 6021
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Dear Committee Secretary

Thank you for the opportunity to provide a submission on the Convention establishing the Square Kilometre Array (SKA) Observatory.

The Western Australian Government supports Australia's ratification of the Convention. The establishment of the SKA-Low telescope in Western Australia will enhance our status as one of the world-leading radio astronomy research centres and build capacity in emerging big data and space sectors. The global significance of the SKA will also enhance Western Australia's status as a premier science location and inspire the next generation of scientists.

The State Government has collaborated closely with the Commonwealth over many years to ensure that Australia co-hosts the SKA Project.

The State Government has recognised that Western Australia's co-hosting of the SKA Project has the potential to bring significant scientific, economic and STEM benefits to Western Australia.

However, the State Government is keen to ensure that co-hosting of the SKA is not solely an infrastructure project whereby Western Australia is just a site for radio astronomy antennas. The Commonwealth must ensure that Western Australia is involved in hi-tech SKA projects and translation activities that are likely to support the State's focus on job growth, economic diversification and innovation.

The State Government has already invested more than \$130 million to support Australia's involvement in the SKA Project, including significant investments in establishing the SKA site, the International Centre for Radio Astronomy Research and the Pawsey Supercomputing Centre. The State will continue to support the SKA project via the provision of appropriate road upgrades for construction and tenure for the extended observatory site.

The State Government looks forward to continuing to collaborate with the Commonwealth to ensure the successful establishment of SKA-Low in Western Australia.

Yours sincerely

Hon Dave Kelly MLA
MINISTER FOR SCIENCE

1 OCT 2019