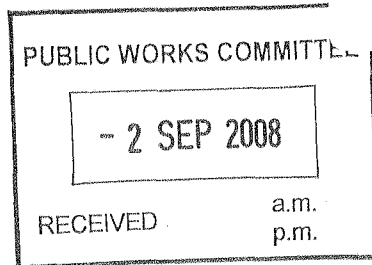


Astronomy
Australia
Ltd.

Submission no. 13
(SKA Pathfinder Radio Telescope)

M.R. 02/09/08



1st September 2008

Committee Secretary
Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works
Department of House of Representatives
PO Box 6021
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Dear Public Works Committee,

Re: Australian SKA Pathfinder Radio Telescope in Geraldton-Greenough and in Murchison Shire, WA

The Members of Astronomy Australia Limited (AAL) include the vast majority of universities and research organisations in Australia with an astronomical research capability. We therefore bring the following matters to your attention regarding the above mentioned proposed works.

Australia's national radio telescopes in New South Wales have contributed greatly to our distinguished international standing in astronomy. The proposed Murchison Radio-astronomy Observatory (MRO) in Western Australia is of critical importance to maintain and enhance this international position. The MRO is a world-class site which is suitable for the next generation of radio telescopes. The construction of the Australian SKA Pathfinder (ASKAP) radio telescope at the MRO will give Australian astronomers access to such a next generation telescope. The suitability of the MRO for radio astronomy has also been noted by a consortium of Australian and USA universities who plan to build the Murchison Wide-field Array (MWA) at the MRO.

Meanwhile the MRO is under serious consideration as the site for hosting the international Square Kilometre Array (SKA). If development of the MRO and ASKAP can proceed without delay, this would strengthen the case for basing the SKA in Australia at the MRO.

We would be pleased to respond to any questions you may have.

Yours faithfully,

Dr Martin Cole
Chair