



National Radio Astronomy Observatory

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MEMORANDUM

To: Science Support Group (SSG) Staff Members

From: Carol Lonsdale, SSG Lead

Date: 5 September 2012

Subject: Management Plan for the SSG and Staffing Roles and Responsibilities

The structure of the Science Support Group (SSG) consists of a single group which encompasses several teams who undertake the execution of the tasks assigned to their team by NAASC management. The overall management plan for the SSG Group is described in this document.

The SSG is responsible for executing all of the Science Support functions of the NAASC. The tasks and their scope are defined by NAASC management, according to the NA ALMA Operations operating plan. This memo describes the roles and responsibilities of the SSG Lead, the Team Coordinators and the SSG staff members, and the overall management plan for the SSG.

SSG Lead and Team Coordinator assignments

SSG Lead: *Carol Lonsdale*

Community Support Team (CST) Coordinator: *Anthony Remijan*

CST Deputy Coordinator: *Alison Peck*

Data Service Team (DST) Coordinator: *Mark Lacy*

DST Deputy Coordinator: *Scott Schnee*

Observatory Support Team (OST) Coordinator: *Kartik Sheth*

OST Deputy Coordinator: *John Hibbard*

Data Analyst Team (DAT) Coordinator: *Andy Hale*

DAT Deputy Team Coordinator: *Anthony Remijan*

Role and Responsibilities of the SSG Lead

The SSG Lead will provide the overall management for Science Support:

- Line manager for all members of the Group.
- Overall supervision and direction to ensure the functions of the SSG are completed on budget, on schedule and within scope
- Develop and track the Implementation Plan for the overall Science Support Task Plan with the Team Coordinator's (TCs) & Deputy Team Coordinators (DTCs)
 - Review and approve the team implementation plans with the TCs & DTCs
 - Allocate staffing resources to the teams, taking into account team requirements for both permanent team members and for the skill sets of staff within another team
 - Ensure the team implementation plans mesh with optimum efficiency
 - Ensure efficient interfaces between the teams
- Secure acceptance of the implementation plan from NAASC management
- Provide overall communication and reporting to NAASC management

Role and Responsibilities of Team Coordinators

The TC will:

- Coordinate the performance of the tasks assigned to the team and have the primary responsibility for ensuring completion of the tasks
- In collaboration with the DTC develop and track the implementation plan for the tasks assigned to the team with input from the team, including schedule and resource requirements, with primary responsibility for reaching agreement within the team
- Secure agreement and approval for the implementation plan from the SSG Lead
- Secure acceptance and approval of deliverables
- Provide communication and status reporting for team functions
- Deliver products on budget¹, on schedule and within scope

Role and Responsibilities of Deputy Team Coordinators

The DTC will:

- In collaboration with the TC, develop and track the implementation plan for the tasks assigned to the team with input from the team, including schedule and resource requirements
- Assist and support the TC in all TC functions, as required
- Act as stand in for the TC during absences

¹ Here budget usually refers not to the dollar cost of the activity but to the staffing and time resource allocated to the task

Role and Responsibilities of SSG Team Members

The staff members of the SSG are responsible for executing tasks and producing deliverables as outlined in the task plan and as assigned by the TCs, at the level of effort or participation that has been defined for them. Team members will:

- Provide input to the TCs to assist and support them with the development of the overall team implementation plan for the tasks assigned to the team
- Discuss their potential task assignments with the TCs of their base team² and reach agreement on assignments in terms of work load, schedule and skills match
- Discuss potential floating task assignments³ with the TCs of both teams involved and reach agreement on assignments in terms of work load, schedule and skills match
- Keep Team Coordinators and SSG Lead informed of any schedule conflicts or other issues affecting performance of the task
- Deliver the agreed upon products on schedule and within scope

Some tasks will require a coordination role, i.e. when a task requires the coordinated effort of several people. In addition to the tasks above, coordinators will:

- Advise Team Coordinators of resource (staff members) and schedule requirements for the task
- Coordinate the effort of all staff members assigned to any element of the task
- Manage any interfaces with other SSG Teams and with other ALMA groups that are required to undertake the task
- Contribute to the task effort

² The base team is defined in the next section

³ Floating task assignments are defined in the next section

Management of Staff Assignment to Teams

The Base Team

Each SSG staff member, including the management staff, will primarily belong to one of the four SSG Teams: Community Support, Data Services, Observatory Support or Data Analysts. The staff assignments to the teams will be made by NAASC management. The overall intention is, for most staff members, that the majority of their task assignments will be focused on tasks within their base team.

Permanent and Floating Effort

The permanence of a staff member's work assignments concerns the degree to which a staff member works mainly on tasks within their base team over the timescale of six months to a year. It is usually desirable and efficient to have work assignments that are focused on the tasks assigned to the base team and that do not change on short timescales.

In certain cases, however, it will be necessary for staff members to work on efforts that are led out of a different team than their base team, which is referred to as floating effort. This may happen when:

- A staff member has a particular skill set or experience level that is not available within the other team
- The required skill set might be available within the other team but the person with those skills may be unavailable to perform the task(s) due to a schedule conflict
- One team has a temporary task that is too large to be undertaken with the available staffing resources (eg. an integrated software test)

Assignment of Floating Efforts

The requirements for floating assignments between the four teams will be factored into the Implementation Plan for the SSG Task Plan, as much as possible; many cross-team skill-set requirements are known in advance and can be scheduled into the overall Implementation Plan once it is developed.

Cross-team skill-set requirements that arise after the Implementation Plan is in place will be negotiated between the staff members and the TCs involved, with oversight of the SSG Lead, guided by the overall priority of the tasks involved.

Line Management

Line management is the supervision of the performance of the assigned efforts by individuals, as distinct from task coordination which involves the organization and supervision of the satisfactory delivery of the products. Line management includes approving timecards, approving travel and doing the yearly PEPs. For the SSG, line management is provided by the SSG Lead, therefore any personnel issues that arise within the SSG are a private matter for discussion between the individual and the SSG Lead.

Grievance Process

NRAO has a formal grievance process which any employee may take advantage of if any issue is not being satisfactorily resolved between themselves and their line manager. The process is fully described in the NRAO Supervisor's manual, which may be accessed on the staff web or through the HR office. The first step of the 3-step grievance process is that the employee may submit the complaint in writing to his/her Division Head. In the case of the NAASC the Division Head is the NAASC Head. The Division Head will investigate the matter, meet with concerned parties as necessary, and render a decision in writing within five working days after receipt of the complaint.

Ombuds Process

In the event that any individual has a complaint or concern about the manner in which a performance issue is being addressed by line management, he/she may bring it to the attention of an NRAO Ombuds Representative at any time. At the current time the Ombuds program at NRAO is being re-organized; an individual wishing to avail themselves of this program should consult HR for further information.