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Subject: Recorder Telecon Minutes
Status: RO

To: Attendees of VLBI Recorder Telecon

From: George Peck

Subject: Minutes of VLBA Recording Telecon held on 13 February, 1997

Attendees:

Haystack:	Hans Hinteregger
NVI:	Ed Himwich
USNO:	Kerry Kingham
MPI:	Walter Alef, Klaus Ruf, Horst Blaschke
JIVE:	Jean Casse, Jan Buiter
JPL:	Benno Rayher, Chris Jacobs,
NRAO:	John Webber, George Peck, Ron Weimer, Bill Brundage

FUTURE NEEDS FOR THIN TAPE

The main topic of this meeting was to discuss the future thin tape need of the different observatories. This is an issue now, for several reasons. The VLBA correlator will be accepting thick tapes for only a short time before becoming a thin tape only correlator. Quantegy has now produced samples of a thin tape which passes mechanical tests at Haystack. We need to give Quantegy an idea of the thin tape needs of the community, since they have to make a decision whether or not to manufacture this tape and sell it to the radio astronomy community. Sony will no longer produce the part number of thin tape which we have purchased in the past, and is planning a replacement product.

Carl Bignell, of NRAO said that NRAO does not have plans to purchase tape during the next couple of years. He said that this could change if we lose more tape than anticipated, or if we have to supply more stations than we now supply.

Chris Jacobs, of JPL, said that there is a need of 25 thin tapes now, for Astrometry, and a possible need of about 75 tape one year from now.

Hans Hinteregger, of Haystack, says that CMVA has set aside $36,000 to purchase some thin tapes now.

Kerry Kingham, of USNO, says that there is no money right now. He predicts that there may be money to purchase no more than 20 this year, and possibly another 20 (maximum) next year.

Klaus Ruf , of MPIFR, said that EVN will decide soon whether to buy thin tape. They will have a better idea after the EVN board of director's meeting at the end of March. He said that if they decide to buy tape, the amount would be greater than 30 tapes.

Ed Himwich, of NVI, said that Goddard now has no money to buy thin tapes for geodessy. He said that if the core proposal is accepted, about 500 tapes would be needed over 3 or 4 years. Goddard would purchase 100, and the rest would be purchased by collaborators.

Hans reported on a quote from Quantegy. Quantegy would be willing to sell the tapes in quantities which are multiples of 3. There are no price breaks above a quantity of 102 tapes. It was mentioned that combining smaller orders of tape to achieve the price break should be possible, as long as the orders are simultaneous and the tape is all shipped to one place. Quantegy is not likely to stock the glass reels. Following are the prices from quote 41-59-GQ11:

Quantity	Price
3-48	$875
51-99	$850
102+	$800

It was noted that electrical tests still are needed on the Quantegy tapes. George Peck and Ron Weimer agreed to do this. As of the date of this memo, these tests have been completed, and the samples tested performed well. Hans also has tested the tapes electrically, and found them to perform well.

OTHER ISSUES

Chris Jacobs asked if there is a headstack which can be used for both thick and thin tape. Hans confirmed that the "triple cap" headstack can be used for both tape thicknesses interchangeably.

There was some discussion about the need for a post pass before tapes are taken down from the drive. This is a reverse pass without stopping, which prevents tape pack shifts. Ed Himwich mentioned that many stations have only one drive, and do not have time to do a separate post pass. In this case, the last pass of the observation would need to be continuous.