

InterOffice

NATIONAL RADIO ASTRONOMY OBSERVATORY

Socorro, New Mexico

February 02, 1987

TO: Addressee

FROM: C. Bignell *CB*SUBJECT: VLBA Operations Meeting of January 15, 1987ATTENDEES: J. Benson, C. Bignell, B. Brundage, R. Escoffier, P. Hicks,
K. Kellermann, P. Napier, J. Romney, C. WalkerMark II Recorders

R. Escoffier has successfully completed the design and testing of the mods required to convert the new VCRs for Mark II recording.

A quote from a Charlottesville company for the mods has been obtained. In lots of 27 the mods will cost \$460/unit (included in this is \$160 in labor). A large number of recorders have been purchased at a cost of \$260/unit.

All of this information has been passed on to the VLBI Network and Caltech. The technical information has also passed on to the European Network.

It was decided that the VLBA will have 9 of their 20 recorders modified in 1987. John Romney will issue a requisition to cover all NRAO sites.

Mark II Formatters

Ken Kellermann has received two JPL Mark II formatters. Ray Escoffier will check with Green Bank to see what manpower is available to check out these units and outfit with power supplies if necessary.

There is also a need to locate more formatters. Iowa will have a formatter available when the VLBA Iowa site becomes operational. Ken Kellermann will check to see if Illinois has an old formatter. Several possibilities need to be checked out to locate more Mark II formatters if we want to operate more than two or three VLBA antennas with Mark II recorders. These include:

- (a) Algonquin Radio Observatory used to have an NRAO Mark II formatter. Do they still have it? Is it available?
- (b) Will there be a Mark II formatter available at Fort Davis when that VLBA site comes on line?
- (c) Several VLBI NUG stations have dual formatters for Mark II polarization experiments. There appears to be little demand for these experiments. Are these formatters separate units? (At the VLA the formatters are packaged together and probably share some hardware and are probably not easily separable.) And would the stations allow us to borrow one of them.

1987 VLBA Operations Budget

Peter Napier reported that NRAO has \$200K allocated towards early VLBA operations this year. The priority is to pay for parts of 5 operating positions (Field Tech Supervisor, Techs for KP and PT, Array Operator and Tape Recorder Eng.).

This will use up about three quarters of the total budget. There will still be power and utilities at PT and KP.

Since the purchase of recording tapes has been overlooked in the construction budget the need to buy tapes this year was discussed. It was decided that no significant purchase of tapes would be made this year since: (a) the early operations will most likely be dominated by Mark II recordings, (b) the possibility that newer (as yet untried?) tapes will allow higher density recording and (c) existing Mark III tapes are not the ones currently used on the VLBA recorders. Any significant purchases will probably await further developments in the recorder area.

AOC

Most of the AOC will be built during Phase I using additional monies which NMIMT will obtain through bonds. Some parts of the Phase I building may be shelled and finished later when the space is needed.

Next Meeting

The next meeting is scheduled for April 1 at 1:30 pm MST.

RCB/ap