



science
& technology

Department:
Science and Technology
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

Private Bag X894, PRETORIA, 0001, RSA. DST Building 53, CSIR Scientia Campus, Meiring Naude Road,
Brummeria, PRETORIA, 0184. Tel: +27 12 843 6300, Fax: +27 12 349 1030

Dr John Womersley
CEO
Science and Technology Facilities Council
Swindon
UK

Dear Dr Womersley

SOUTH AFRICA'S RESPONSE TO THE SSAC REPORT AND RECOMMENDATION

This letter constitutes our response to Collin Greenwood's e-mail of 23 February 2012, which solicits comments and questions of clarification regarding the SSAC report and recommendation.

We feel that it is not appropriate for us to make input as Directors at this stage. The Articles of Association (specifically Article 46.1) and the Byelaws do not provide for such input from the Directors at this stage of the site selection process, regardless of affiliation. In particular, we do not want to jeopardize the agreed process outlined in the Articles, which stipulates that the SSAC report should be forwarded to the Members as soon as possible. We do not believe that the Board should repeat the mandate of the SSG, and certainly would not want to see a scenario where the SSAC recommendation or the site selection process are unduly influenced by a potential host country. It would be regrettable if the process to this point, the status of the SSAC report, and its value in the site selection decision were undermined. We urge the Board to ensure that engagements with the SSAC and its chairman do not stray beyond what has been agreed in the Articles and SKA Byelaws.

If the Board is going to submit comments and questions of clarification to the SSAC, then we strongly recommend that the scope of these queries is very carefully limited to questions of clarification and that no new information should be introduced. We understand that there is a view that such queries will bolster the credibility of an already robust SSAC report, and we respect this sentiment. However, the Board should not seek to change the SSAC's report or recommendation, as this will subvert the whole principle of using an independent, external expert panel, whose terms of reference and membership were agreed upon by all parties, and whose work was subsequently vetted by the SSG. Possible changes to the report would undoubtedly jeopardize the site selection process, and inflict reputational risk on the SKA Organization and the global project.

We reserve our right to comment on the SSAC report and the process as members and directors of the SKA Organization, in compliance with the agreed processes captured in the Articles of Association and Byelaws.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Dr. Phil Mjwara'. The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'P'.

DR PHIL MJWARA
DIRECTOR-GENERAL OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY
DATE: 28 February 2012