



CAASTRO Newsletter: Issue # 1, 1st April 2011

### **Welcome to CAASTRO!**

Today is our first day as an ARC Centre of Excellence, and I'm delighted let you know that we have now formally commenced operations. Of course much work has already been going on - read on to hear all about it.

**Branding:** A Brand Workshop was held in December 2010, and Yello Brands have been working on the CAASTRO Branding since that time. The CAASTRO Executive initially considered three brand concepts for CAASTRO, and made a decision regarding their preferred option. After a consultative process with various stakeholders, a final design has been selected, which you can see at the top of this newsletter.

From next week you will be able to use our new logo on official documents, and marketing collateral will be gradually released as it becomes available. A PowerPoint template will be coming soon, and the CAASTRO WWW site, [caastro.org](http://caastro.org), is going to be redesigned. By popular demand, t-shirts are coming soon!

CAASTRO is now on both [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#) - please follow us to keep up to date on our activities and discoveries, and to participate in on-line discussion.

**Recruitment:** Twelve research positions were advertised internationally in late 2010, spread across all six CAASTRO nodes and all three research themes. All offers have now been made, and 11 of the 12 positions have now been filled. We are now in the process of preparing and offering formal offers of employment. In most cases, the successful candidate will commence in Aug/Sep/Oct 2011.

Note that it is CAASTRO policy that all positions be advertised as either full time or part time unless a full-time appointment is an essential component of the position. Two of the research positions above have been taken up part time.

In addition to the positions advertised, there have been six research appointments on nomination (3 at U. Sydney, 3 at Swinburne), either to fill an urgent vacancy or to shift existing staff with relevant experience onto CAASTRO funding.

**Publications:** A grant from the NSW Government allowed us to commence CAASTRO activities in 2010, in advance of ARC funding. Consequently, the first CAASTRO paper has now been completed, and has been submitted to The Astrophysical Journal (Letters). The paper is entitled "Visibility stacking in the quest for Type Ia supernova radio emission" by Hancock, Gaensler & Murphy, and presents a new way of searching for transient radio signals. Additional work by the CAASTRO team at Curtin University on new radio transient algorithms should result in additional publications in the coming months.

CAASTRO now has a policy for publications. Please check out the guidelines at [caastro.org/Policies/Publications](http://caastro.org/Policies/Publications).

**Meetings:** CAASTRO held a kick-off meeting in Sydney on 10 November 2010. This was a well attended event, which allowed wide ranging discussion on strategy, governance and science.

Monthly Sydney-area CAASTRO meetings (encompassing Sydney, CSIRO and AAO) have been held since September 2010, alternating between Camperdown and Marsfield. Each meeting consists of a Director's update, a science presentation, and open/informal discussion.

CAASTRO has agreed to co-sponsor three upcoming meetings:

- ["Women in Astronomy" workshop](#), Sydney, 13 May 2011
- ["Novel Radio Telescopes for 21cm Cosmology"](#), Canada, 13-16 June 2011
- ["Gas in Galaxies: From Cosmic Web to Molecular Clouds"](#), Germany, 14-18 June 2011

For more information go to [caastro.org/Meetings](http://caastro.org/Meetings) .

**Briefings:** We have begun a programme of government briefings at the state, federal and international levels, as follows:

- 3 Nov 2010: NSW Office of Scientific and Medical Research
- 22 Nov 2010: Industry and Investment NSW
- 4 Mar 2011: Industry and Investment NSW
- 10 Mar 2011: Commonwealth Department of Innovation
- 22 Mar 2011: German Consulate, Sydney
- 21 Apr 2011: US National Science Foundation

**Income:** Our ARC-mandated KPIs require us to generate additional income each year. So far we have secured two additional funding awards:

- \$290,000 from Industry and Investment NSW as part of their Science Leveraging Fund, to support research on The Dynamic Universe theme at The University of Sydney
- \$50,000 from the Commonwealth Department of Innovation as part of their International Science Linkages programme, to support the workshop that CAASTRO is co-sponsoring on "Novel Radio Telescopes" in Canada in June 2011 (see above).

**Governance:** The draft CAASTRO Advisory Committee Terms of Reference have been developed and were approved at the first CAASTRO Advisory Board Meeting on 25 March 2011. The Chair of the Advisory Board is Dr Alan Finkel AM, the Chancellor of Monash University. The full list of Advisory Board members is at [caastro.org/People](http://caastro.org/People) .

A Charter for the CAASTRO Executive has also been developed, and the Executive meets face-to-face on a quarterly basis, and monthly via videoconference (see the schedule of Executive meetings at [caastro.org/Meetings](http://caastro.org/Meetings) ). The Executive of CAASTRO is:

Professor Bryan Gaensler, U. Sydney  
Professor Lister-Steveley-Smith, UWA/ICRAR  
Professor Matthew Bailes, Swinburne U.  
Professor Brian Schmidt, ANU  
Professor Steven Tingay, Curtin U.  
Professor Stuart Wyithe, U. Melbourne  
Ms Kate Gunn, Chief Operating Officer

**Legal Documents:** The University of Sydney signed the ARC Funding Agreement in late 2010, and agreed to the associated KPIs attached to that agreement. All CAASTRO organisations have now signed the Multi-Institutional Agreement, and the Collaboration Partners have now signed the Collaboration Agreement. This is a necessary requirement to receive the ARC Centre of Excellence Funding, which will commence this week.

**Launch:** It is anticipated that the launch of CAASTRO will be held at Sydney Observatory some time in July 2011. This is subject to the availability of the Federal Minister for Science, Senator The Hon Kim Carr, and some political negotiations with the Heritage Council regarding tents at the Observatory! More news on this as soon as it comes to hand.

**Strategic Plan:** The CAASTRO Executive held a planning meeting on Friday 11 March 2011, and the COO will now create a draft Strategic Plan for discussion based on this information.

**Finance:** Work has commenced on creating a formal budget and management reporting process for CAASTRO.

Thank you to everyone who has been working so hard to bring CAASTRO to life. This is an exciting time, and I look forward to advising you of our progress on a monthly basis. In the meantime, please don't hesitate to email, call or talk to me with any questions or suggestions.

with best wishes,

Bryan Gaensler  
CAASTRO Director

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