Report of a User's Committee Dinner Meeting held 05/23/05 in New Orleans. Attending the meeting were: committee members Radick (for Joel Mozer), Berger, Ayers, Leka, and Goode, NSO staff Keil, Rimmele, Harvey, and Leibacher, and Dave Byers from AFOSR.

The majority of the discussion centered on updates concerning the operations of present facilities, present status of ATST and SOLIS, and the future make-up of the User's committee itself.

Concerning the operations of present facilities, the 'state' of Sacramento Peak took most of the discussion. There is a move at NSO/SP to implement a queuing procedure, which would bump on-site PIs more routinely. While bumping had been a part of operations historically at the telescope, with some instrumentation moving toward permanent setups (see below), a move has been proposed to allow more queuing for efficient operations of those instruments for PI driven science. The Users Committee endorses this effort to implement queue based observing. This will make it easier to coordinated with space missions and to take advantage of specific conditions on the sun and seeing quality at the telescope.

The Diffraction Limited Stokes Polarimeter (DLSP) is a new permanent-setup installed at the Dunn Solar Telescope that will be the core instrument for the queue based observing. The DLSP was developed jointly by HAO and NSO. The DLSP scanning-slit spectrograph system is designed to operate in conjunction with the DST's high-order adaptive optics system. It can operate in two resolution modes, and recently two new imaging cameras have been installed for simultaneous imaging. With the report that Bruce Lites at NCAR/HAO is "happy" with the setup, the DLSP is essentially finished. The hope is to have an on-line data reduction procedure, even though at this point the PI is still responsible for the data and the data storage medium is still DLT tape. The DLSP should be released as a user instrument this summer.

Additional instrumentation developments at the DST include the Italian BI-dimensional Imaging Spectrograph (IBIS) dual Etalon filter system from Italy with its 0.08" sampling and 20mA spectral resolution from 500-900nm. The plan is to enhance this system with the ability to do full vector polarimetry, which is currently underway.

The Advanced Stokes Polarimeter has been transmogrified into the Spectro-Polarimeter for Infrared and Optical Regions (SPINOR), which adds IR capabilities and modern cameras to the ASP. Currently the use of the IR camera must be scheduled fairly far in advance as it belongs to HAO and is also used in the HAO coronal oneshot vector magnetograph experiment (see below) at the NSO/SP Hilltop facility. SPINOR is currently being debugged and should be commissioned as a user instrument early next year.

There was a suggestion from the committee to improve the communication about new instrumentation to the community through announcements in SolarNews. There was also concern expressed that the user community for the DST has decreased. However, since the advent of adaptive optics, proposal pressure as steadily increased and most quarters find the DST oversubscribed by 30-100%. The committee sees this as a healthy trend for solar physics, but suggests that additional proactive documentation and advertising of developments of this resource should be undertaken for optimal scientific use in the upcoming decade or more before ATST is operational.

NSO has minimized its support for the Evans Solar Facility and for the Hilltop facility. NSO support of the Evans consists of only minor preventative maintenance and repair only when resources can be freed without serious impact on DST and project support. The AF pays for the operation of their synoptic program at the Evans and HAO has expressed interest in doing some experiments with the Evans coronagraph for which they would supply the support. At the Hilltop, the flare patrol is no longer operated (the data has been replaced by the AF ISOON program and SOLIS). The coronal one-shot instrument has been modified by HAO to test methods of making coronal magnetograms.

SOLIS has now 2 years of limited data available, with Jack Harvey and co-workers working to provide the transverse field magnitude and orientation along with the line of sight magnitude and direction. The minimal budget and the loss of Christoph Keller, first to sabbatical and now to a permanent position in Europe has been a serious blow to this system's timeline. Additional setbacks due to optics failures are being experienced now, and the full-disk patrol is "languishing". The committee did not discuss the SOLIS situation in depth or in private and it is unclear to the committee whether in their opinion adequate support has been provided to this project. Still, many people have been using the VSM line-of-sight data and the system for handling users' special requests is almost finished. Jack Harvey has successfully obtained grants from NASA to support SOLIS operations and analysis during 2005/6. NSO plans to fully commission SOLIS in late 2005 or early 2006, prepare a proposal for developing a network of three SOLIS stations and form international partnerships for its support, and to ramp up SOLIS support in 2007 if funded at the level proposed in its cooperative agreement with NSF.

GONG is now in standard operation and is no longer a "project". Included in data products now are (with GONG+) the line-of-sight magnetic flux and (with GONG++) the processed flow maps. Some systematic and atmospheric problems have been reported with respect to noise, and fixes are in progress. Currently, all of the GONG++ high-resolution local seismology data is available on line, and the 1 minute cadence magnetograms will be added shortly.

The NSF Senior Review for its present facilities is being conducted this summer, although a specific time-line has not yet been set. Reports from the observatories are due by 31 July. The NSO Long Range Plan calls for divestment of the DST and McMath-Pierce when the ATST is placed into operations. It also calls for the consolidation of the NSO staff at a TBD headquarters location, with a small contingent of scientists co-located with the ATST. The Users Committee strongly supports this plan. The committee also fully endorses the operations of current facilities that are needed to support the solar community until the ATST is commissioned.

Concerning ATST, the NSO is quite leveraged for outside money, and partnerships are strong; the reviews for the design studies were finished last year and the cost review has increased the estimates to \$174M. The main concern now centers on when the ATST will go into NSF's budget; it is in limbo, waiting to get submitted to the National Science Board which advises NSF. With much further delay it will miss OMB's 2007 budget and delay construction by a year at minimum. The committee strongly urges NSF to move forward with ATST as quickly as possible.

Tom Ayres has chaired the committee for close to a decade and requested that another member become chair. In addition, a few members have been unable to attend meetings routinely. Berger, Sykora, and Jennings will continue as members, Tomczyk will be asked to replace Judge, Ayres will continue as a member, and the new chair is Leka. Hildner and Goode will rotate off and Keil will find replacements. There was discussion for additional members representing the forecasting and helioseismology communities. The next face-toface all-NSO staff meeting(s) will be held at the beginning of September, and it is the goal to have a full User's committee meeting held in the same venue at the same time.