

NEWSLETTER – AUGUST 2011

Following a presentation at an SKA workshop in Carnarvon (Northern Cape) in May of this year, Prof Charles McGruder (from the Western Kentucky University in the USA) has requested the use of the Indlebe Radio Telescope (IRT) data for astronomical research that he is conducting. This is the first time that the data being received by the IRT is being used for astronomy and the team is very excited about this.

As mentioned in the last newsletter, the first two antennas for the MITRA array at DUT have now been built. They are being tested for XXXXX before the remaining 14 are built. This project has received direct financial support from the South African Department of Science and Technology.



Figure 1

We continue to receive more students interested in studying to become technicians and technologists in radio astronomy engineering. The first four students from the African Partner Countries arrived this month to begin their National Diploma studies. We now have ten students at the undergraduate level. Part of the group can be seen in Figure 1 assisting with the MITRA antenna testing. In addition we have a further five students at the MTech degree level. All ten of the undergraduate students (National Diploma and BTech degree) are fully supported

by the National Research Foundation (NRF) in South Africa. At this stage we are planning a further four National Diploma students plus two more MTech degree students in 2012.

The prototype first element of the Indlebe Enkulu radio telescope has been built and is being prepared for calibration and testing. For several reasons the design had to be changed at the last minute and the telescope will now consist of an array of 18 circular XXXX. Figure 2 show the prototype being set up in the laboratory.

Figure 2

If you have any comments or questions please feel free to contact me by return email. Should you wish to be removed from the mailing list, please send me an email with the words 'remove me'. Please feel free to pass this newsletter on to anyone not receiving it.

Gary J van Vuuren

