

IAA Study Group Status Report 2010

Responsible Commission:

Commission 1 (Space Physical Sciences) and Commission 6 as an involved commission.

Study Number and Title:

SETI Permanent Study Group

Short Study Description (repeat from Study Group Proposal):

SETI is an acronym for the Search for Extraterrestrial Intelligence. The primary goal is to examine all aspects of possible future contact with extraterrestrial civilizations, with special reference to international issues and activities. These aspects include technical efforts to find evidence for extraterrestrial intelligence as well as the social consequences of such a discovery. In addition, this group promotes the interest and eventual involvement of students in this work, primarily through education initiatives, the Internet, and the mass media.

Progress in past six months:

The SETI Permanent Study Group (PSG) continues to pursue activities that are relevant to, and enhance the work of, SETI searches world-wide. These activities take the form of long-term studies, presentation and publication of SETI topics at the IAC annual meetings, and revision of documents relevant to a SETI detection.

In the last year, and largely due to the efforts of PSG member John Elliott, we have achieved a breakthrough in the publication of selected presentations made during the annual IAC meetings. *Acta Astronautica* will have a special issue on SETI, and many of the past papers will be included, after refereeing.

This is not only gratifying to the members of the PSG, but will also serve as an incentive for greater participation in the Group's activities in the future.

At the Daejeon IAC, the final draft of the revised protocols bearing on the response to a SETI detection was presented and approved. These last revisions were suggested by members of the PSG who are also expert in space law, and consisted of inserting both language and clarification that served to make the revised document both clearer and more functional. We are now hoping to proceed to have this revised protocol be approved by the IAA Board, and eventually replacing the more-than-twenty-year old document now on file with COPUOS.

During the Daejeon 2009 meeting, eighteen papers were presented in two SETI sessions, a surprisingly large number given the unusual expense of attending this meeting for many parties. The special invited lecture for the SETI II session, the Billingham Cutting Edge Lecture, featured speaker James Gardner speaking on the relevance of cosmological models to SETI. The Pesek Lecture was given by Myung-Hyun Rhee on SETI programs in Korea.

Website Study Information up to date? (Study Group Membership, Study Plan and Schedule):

The Web site at <http://iaaseti.org> continues to contain updated information regarding the SETI Permanent Study Group.

Issues requiring resolution? (recommend approach):

(1) See above: revised protocol, (2) PSG subgroup will consider improving communication channels in the case of a detection.

Product Deliveries on Schedule? (If modified explain rationale):

Yes.

Study Team Member Changes? (List any Study Team Members that you wish to discontinue, and provide names plus contact coordinates of any Members you wish to add on the second page of this Study Update form.) Note: Complete contact information including email, tel. and fax must be provided for all additions. Only Members with complete contact information will be listed and receive formal appointment letters from the IAA Secretariat.)

Name of person providing Study Group Status (Study Group Chair or Co-Chair):

Seth Shostak, Chair, SETI Permanent Study Group

Status Report Date:

March 21, 2010

Study Team Membership Changes

Effectivity Date: Immediately

Discontinue:

Name: Valeria Ascheri

Current email address: ascheriv@tiscali.it

Name: Harvey Butcher

Current email address: hbutcher@nfra.nl

Name: Vladimir Pletser

Current email address: Vladimir.Pletser@esa.int

Name: Salvatore Santoli

Current email address: intitsnt@uni.net

Add:

Name: Paul Davies

Current email address: deepthought@asu.edu

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Name: Curtis Mead

Current email address: cmead@fas.harvard.edu

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