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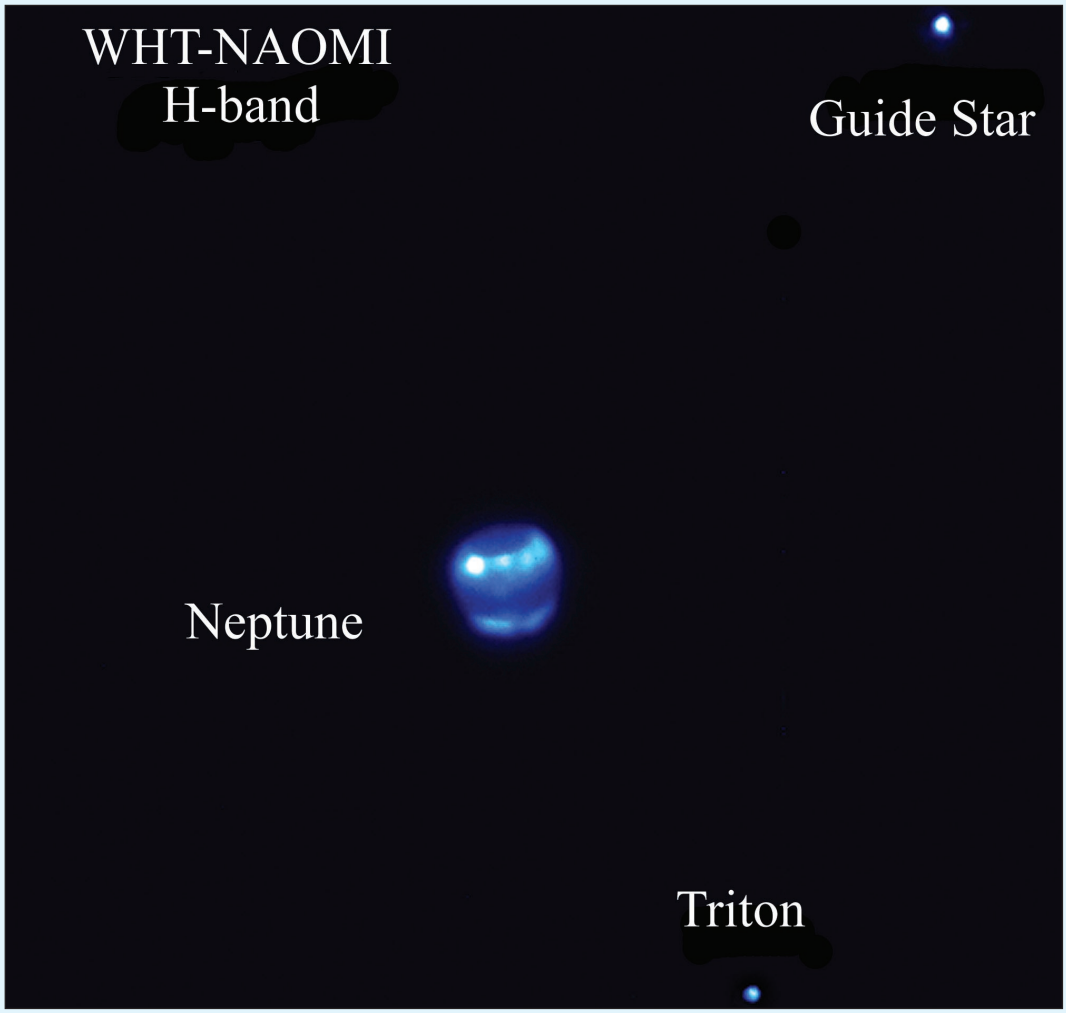
The Isaac Newton Group of Telescopes

NEWSLETTER



NAOMI Neptune in H band (1.6 microns). 120-sec integration, using as wavefront reference a star (V ~10, top right) which happened to be nearby on the night. Neptune's diameter is 2.3 arcsec. The clouds are prominent in H band because of a strong methane line at a wavelength close to 1.6 micron. Triton is visible near the bottom of the image (see article by C. R. Benn et al. on page 21).

Message from the Director

Dear Reader,

Whilst the telescopes on La Palma keep going strong, a large number of changes are taking shape at the ING. Last winter important decisions were taken by PPARC Council that have a profound influence on the UK's ground-based astronomy programme. As a result, the UK is now a member of the European Southern Observatory, but these decisions also imply a siginificant shift in the balance of resources. One particular implication is a reduction of funds for the ING telescopes in the future.

In order to offset the reduction of funding from PPARC, a formal partnership with the Instituto de Astrofísica de Canarias has been agreed. This collaboration will further strengthen international collaboration between the European partners at the ORM, and at the same time reduce the impact of the reduced UK funding.

Nevertheless, the overall reduction in resources enforces a number of important changes at