

News from the Roque

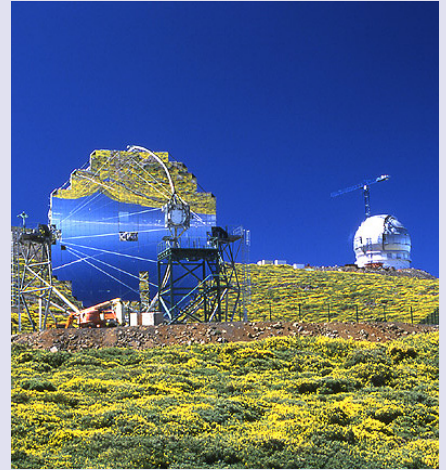
The 10-m GTC project is making visible good progress. As can be seen from the web cameras on the GTC's web page the telescope mount has been completed, and the telescope structure itself is being mounted inside the dome. At the time of writing the mirror support cell is already completed. The first mirror segments have been received, as are the first instrument components such as the acquisition and guiding units and the commissioning camera. First light for this telescope is coming closer!

The large Cherenkov telescope, MAGIC, is nearly fully operational. All mirrors have been fitted, providing for an impressive sight at night as well as during the day. First detections have already been registered early in the year. The 'Counting House' has been constructed close to the telescope, also containing a dome that will host a small telescope used for calibration purposes. Furthermore, advanced plans exist for the construction of a second telescope of similar characteristics as MAGIC-1 and will be placed in the same area.

The SuperWASP (Wide Angle Search for Planets) project is now fully operational and has been collecting data already for several months, but still under the watchful eye of an observer. The telescope was inaugurated very appropriately in a remote fashion in April. The system has operated throughout summer in an automatic fashion. Later this year the telescope is expected to start full robotic operation and be fitted with the full complement of 8 cameras.

The Liverpool telescope has had its first robotic observations earlier in the year. Following an upgrade to the hydraulic system for the enclosure the telescope will be ready for full operation. □

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Top: MAGIC telescope and GTC (photo courtesy Francesca Phillips). Bottom: SuperWASP.

Personnel Movements

Andy Hide returned to the UK unfortunately only after having spent just over a year with ING as Head of the Telescope and Instrument Group. Andy's vacancy has been filled by **Diego Cano**, who joined ING in September.

After many years at ING **Doug Gray** also decided to return to the UK. It will be particularly difficult to replace his vast knowledge and experience of the infrastructure that is key to ING.

Juerg Rey, who was until recently heading the group of Telescope Operators, has assumed the role of Duty Head of the Operations Group, while **Juan Carlos Guerra** has brought the Telescope Operator Group back up to strength again.

In the software group **Stephen Goodsell** decided to take up a position at Durham University to work on adaptive optics related projects and to progress his PhD. Vacant positions in the software group, some related to new development projects have been filled by **Niko Apostolakos**, **Jure Skvarc** and **Sergio Pico**.

Betty Vander Elst assisted the Administration group for some time on a part-time basis, but left ING during spring of this year.

Also the Astronomy Group has seen significant changes. Support Astronomers **Almudena Zurita** and **Paco Prada**, as well as **Marco Azzaro** (Telescope Operator) have started a new life in Granada, while **Illona Söchting** moved to Oxford to work on the Gemini telescope project. **Mischa Schirmer** and **Samantha Rix**, both with extensive experience in observational astronomy, have joined the team.

All those who have left ING and have worked hard to make ING into the successful observatory it is today are wished well in their new careers.