



## News

### » [SKA Pathfinder telescope to be built in WA](#)

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Australia's Square Kilometre Array Pathfinder (ASKAP) radio telescope will be built in Western Australia west following an Indigenous Land Use Agreement (ILUA) signed with traditional owners, the Wajarri Y people, said Senator Kim Carr, minister for Innovation, Industry, Science and Research.

The ILUA is a result of negotiations between the Commonwealth, Western Australia, CSIRO, the Yama Marpa Aboriginal Corporation and the Wajarri Yamatji people and covers land in Western Australia's M which will house the ASKAP and become a permanent observatory site.

The ILUA was registered by the National Native Title Tribunal on 13 November 2009.

Carr and Attorney General Robert McClelland welcomed the result, saying it was a critical step towards securing the Square Kilometre Array radio telescope for Australia.

"The SKA will be the most advanced radio telescope ever built, with the capacity to see back to the dawn of time," said Carr in a statement. "Securing a home for the ASKAP project, a critical precursor to the huge project, is a real advance for the bid we are running with the New Zealand Government."

According to the CSIRO Australian Telescope National Facility, which leads the ASKAP project in collaboration with scientists and engineers in Canada, the Netherlands, United Kingdom and Germany, as well as from Australian universities and industry partners, the telescope will be able to capture images of large areas of the sky faster than is currently possible with existing radio telescopes due to its design.

CSIRO said its antennas feature three-axis movement, while all other radio telescopes in the world move on two axes. ASKAP will also use 'phased array feeds' rather than 'single pixel feeds' to detect and amplify radio waves. As a result, ASKAP will generate more information than is currently contained on the Web in one week and more information that is contained in the world's academic libraries in one month, said CSIRO.

CSIRO said the region was chosen because of the small population and resultant lack of man-made radio signals that would otherwise interfere with weak astronomical signals. The full ASKAP system, comprising estimated 36 antennas onsite at the MRO, will be fully operational by 2013.

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