SKAMP - the Molonglo SKA Demonstrator
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Introduction
Two substantial demonstrator projects have been funded for installation on the Molonglo Telescope:
A 96-station, widebandl FX correlator
A broad-band line feed system for a cylindrical paraboloid.
These two projects constitute the SKA Molonglo Prototype – SKAMP. Installed on the Molonglo Telescope they will result in a significant trial of key SKA engineering elements and also significantly enhance the scientific value of the Molonglo Telescope.

Background
The Molonglo Telescope was commissioned in 1965 as a 408 MHz Mills Cross with 1600m long arms. It was converted in 1982 to a 843 MHz synthesis telescope, using just the E-W arm. The structure was designed to suit a possible extension to 1400 MHz, which makes the telescope an excellent platform to demonstrate the feasibility of a cylindrical paraboloid for the SKA station.

Cylindrical SKA
The cylindrical reflector provides a low cost reflector for the SKA while providing a large FOV and high speed survey capabilities. However a number of novel design aspects are needed:
Wide bandwidth feeds, RF beamformers, Digital beamformers and High capacity spectral line correlators
SKAMP will prototype these and validate their application to the SKA.

Science Goals
Low-frequency radio spectrometry (300-1420 MHz)
Selection of objects via their radio spectral shape, e.g. candidate high redshift (z>3) galaxies with ultra-steep radio spectra (de Breuck et al. 2000), study the formation of galaxies and massive black holes.
Redshifted HI (300-1420 MHz)
HI in absorption against bright continuum sources over a wide redshift range (z=0 to 3). HI in emission - evolution of the HI mass function from z=0 to 0.5.
Low-frequency Galactic recombination lines
Recombination lines of carbon and hydrogen can be used to probe the partially-ionized ISM.

Gamma Ray Bursters
Electronic beam steering gives a 5% chance of capturing a random event.
Concurrent SETI search, and Pulsars and Source Flux Monitoring
18 to 400 deg² accessible around main beam. Real time de-dispersion.

Continuum Correlator Performance Enhancement
The continuum correlator will run in parallel with and eventually replace the current imaging system. It will measure all correlations and recover all redundant information allowing at least a 10:1 increase in imaging dynamic range. The extra correlation and reduced correlator losses increase sensitivity, while RFI inputs to the correlator will allow us to test RFI mitigation strategies.

Project Status and Plan
2002-2003 : Continuum Operation (being installed)
New IF Samplers; Digital delay lines; Fringe tracking.
Continuum correlator (96 station; 4 MHz), companion poster.
2004-2005 : Spectral Line Operation
New LO
New IF distribution
2048 channel polyphase filter/antenna
Spectral line cross-correlator engine (50 MHz BW)
2004-2007: Wide Band Operation
Wide band feed (300-1400 MHz)
RF beamformers distributed along the cylinder
New frontend
Digital beamformer + increased correlator BW

Sensitivity of the Molonglo telescope for high-redshift HI observations.

Galaxy with velocity width ΔV = 200 km/s

HIPASS (8 min) H0 = 50 km/s/Mpc, q0 = 0.5
Molonglo (12 hr) (10 x 12 hr) 1.7 deg² field

Redshift z

Log Mlim (HI) (M⊙)

8 9 10 11

0 0.1 0.2 0.3