

Director's Corner

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Nick Walker

Project Managers' World Tour

Today's issue features a Director's Corner from Nick Walker, Project Manager for the Global Design Effort.

For my first appearance as guest author for the Director's Corner, I find it fitting that I am writing this in an airport lounge. I am currently waiting to get on a plane to fly to the Fermilab Global Design Effort meeting, where we will finally say goodbye to the Reference Design phase, and formally begin the new Engineering Design (ED) phase for the ILC. By the time you read this article, the meeting will be (almost) over, and with it will conclude a very busy planning phase for the International Linear Collider project management.

Since the RDR was officially published in August, my fellow 'troika' and I have been clocking-up a lot of air miles. To begin the transition to the new ED phase management structure, we have held a gruelling series of so-called 'kick-off' meetings: part planning, part review, these meetings have covered every aspect of the ILC reference design. Typically lasting two to three days each, the meetings have spanned the ILC globe. We started in Fermilab, US in late August, reviewing controls, the bunch-compressor system and the first part of the conventional facilities and siting (CFS). Following up, the beginning of September saw the 'troika tour' moving to CERN in Geneva, Switzerland, for the second of three CFS reviews. Then it was immediately off to KEK, Japan for cryomodules; on to DESY, Germany the following week for SCRF cavities; the next week at SLAC for the electron source, immediately followed by the Main Linac meeting at Fermilab. October saw meetings for high-level RF (SLAC, US), and then back to KEK for the third helping of CFS. Positron source was next (Cockcroft Institute, UK) and finally the beam delivery system (again at SLAC).



Only one accelerator system remains: the damping rings in early November at the Cockcroft Institute. We tried to squeeze this last one in before the Fermilab GDE meeting, but you can only do so much flying.

Was it worth it? In my opinion, yes. As we move towards the new ED phase management structure, the face-to-face meetings certainly allowed an important dialogue between the management and our most important resource - our people. This dialogue has gone both ways, and I'm sure that I speak for my fellow Project Managers by saying that we have personally learnt a great deal. Technically, the meetings have allowed us to begin to plan a way forward for the ED phase, in understanding exactly the state of the Reference Design Report work, where there were important omissions and where we should set out priorities. All of this gathered information will by now have been summarised and scrutinised at the GDE meeting, whose goal it is to produce a clear plan with both short and longer-term milestones for the next three years.

Although the kick-off meetings did not always produce consensus as to the best way forward, there was one conclusion that I'm sure we all share: there remains a very large amount of work to do. We can only achieve our ambitious goals if we all pull together and support the common effort. I think we have started that effort with the kick-off meetings, and before I go to catch my flight, I'd like to take this opportunity to thank all of our 'hosts' who organised and arrange them. Many thanks for a job well done. I am looking forward with excitement to working closely with you as our adventure continues.

-- Nick Walker