

**From:** Paul Crowther [mailto:Paul.Crowther@sheffield.ac.uk]

**Sent:** Sat 1/26/2008 10:11 PM

**To:** Hugh Jones

**Cc:** Keith Mason (STFC,CPC); Richard Wade (STFC,SPO); Gordon Ernest Bromage; Ade, Peter; Aylward, Alan; Bailey, Mark; Baldwin, John; Balikhin, M; Balogh, Andre; Barlow, Mike; Barrow, John; Barstow, Martin; Bate, Matthew; Bob Bingham (RAL,SPBU); Binns, Chris; Birkinshaw, K; Birkinshaw, Mark; Bode, Mike; Bonnell, Ian; Bower, R; Brinks, Ellias; Brown, John; Browne, Ian; Burchell, Mark; Burnell, Jocelyn; Cameron, Andrew; Cargill, Peter; Carr, Brian; Carswell, Bob; Carter, Dave; Chapman, Sandra; Charles, Phil; Cockell, Charles; Coe, Malcolm; Cole, Shaun; Coles, Peter; Collins, Chris; Copeland, Ed; Cowley, Stan; Crowther, Paul; Cruise, Mike; Culhane, Len; Davies, Rod; Davies, Roger; Dean, Tony; Dehnen, Walter; Diamond, Phil; Done, Chris; Dougherty, Michelle; Doyle, Gerry; Drew, Janet; Dufton, Philip; Malcolm Dunlop (RAL,SPBU); Dyson, John; Eales, Steve; Edmunds, Mike; Efstathiou, George; Elliott, David; Elsworth, Yvonne; Emerson, Jim; Evans, Nye; Fabian, Andy; Fender, Rob; Fitzsimmons, Alan; Fraser, George; Frenk, Carlos; Gear, Walter; Gibson, Bradley Kenneth; Gilmore, Gerry; Gough, Douglas; Grady, Monica; Grande, Manuel; Greaves, Neville; Griffin, Matt; Grishchuk, Leonid; Gull, Stephen; Haniff, Chris; Mike Hapgood (RAL,SPBU); Harra, Louise; Richard Harrison (RAL,SPBU); Hartquist, Tom; Hewish, Antony; Hills, Richard; Hood, Alan; Horne, Keith; Hough, J; Hough, Jim; Howarth, Ian; Hughes, David; John, Papaloizou; Jones, Barrie; Jones, Mike; Jordan, Carole; Keenan, Francis; Kennicut, Rob; King, Andrew; Knapen, Johan; Kurtz, Donald Wayne; Lahav, Ofer; Lasenby, Anthony; Lawrence, Andy; Lester, Mark; Liddle, Andrew; Lidsey, Jim; Mike Lockwood (RAL,SPBU); Longair, Malcolm; Lyne, Andrew; Maartens, Roy; Macdonald, Geoff; Marsh, Tom; Mason, Nigel; Mavron, V; McCaughrean, Mark; McHardy, Ian; Meikle, Peter; Merrifield, Michael; Millar, Tom; Miller, John; Miller, Steve; Mitchell, Nick; Morris, Simon; Mundell, Carole; Murdin, Paul; Murray, Carl; Nandra, Kirpal; Naylor, Tim; Nelson, Richard; Nichol, Robert; Pedlar, Alan; Pettini, Max; Phillipps, Stephen; Pillinger, Colin; Ponman, Trevor; Pounds, Ken; Priest, Eric; Pringle, Jim; Rawlings, Steve; Rees, Martin; Roberts, Bernard; Robertus; Robinson, Michael; Robinson, Terry; Ian Robson; Adrian Russell; Roxburgh, Ian; Ruderman, M S; Sarre, Peter; Sathyaprakash, B; Schutz, Bernard; Schwartz, Steve; Shanks, Tom; Silk, Joe; Simnett, George; Smail, Ian; Smartt, Stephen; Smith, Michael; Smith, Robert; Starkman, Glenn; Strain, K; Sumner, Timothy; Tadhunter, Clive; Tavakol, Reza; Tennyson, Jonathan; Thomas, Peter; Thompson, Michael; Walters, K; Wands, David; Ward, Martin; Warwick, Bob; Watson, Alan; Watson, Mike; White, Glenn; Whitworth, Anthony; Wilkinson, Peter; Williams, David; Williams, Iwan; Willis, Alan; Willmore, Peter; Withington, Stafford; Worrall, Diana; Wright, Ian; Zijlstra, Albert; bsl@phys.soton.ac.uk; J.C.Zarnecki; michael.kramer@manchester.ac.uk; Rob Ivison; s.g.ryan@herts.ac.uk; shude.mao@manchester.ac.uk

**Subject:** Re: Gemini announcement

It is only fair that STFC have their position made clearer, below is a response from Richard Wade today, which I hope to have reproduced accurately - i'm all for openness at this time..

It seems the sticking point causing the Nov announcement was Aspen instrumentation development (believed to be 24% of US\$70m over 5 yr) on top of operating costs. The case to retain access to GN and ramp down access to GS over a three yr period was put in Dec to the board who held an emergency telecon on Jan 24. The board took the UK position to be untenable, and so ejected the UK with immediate effect - 'hastily' according to Richard (though no formal notice to withdraw from STFC has been issued yet). Pulling the plug on UK G08A programmes caused some heated debate apparently, from my second source within the Board. Richard told me that the announcement was made to Michael Rowan-Robinson and Roger Davies on Friday, and appeared genuinely sympathetic to my frustration about the strategic consequences for UK astronomy (over a couple of million pounds).

For what its now worth, according to Richard, Gemini ranks on the middle tier in the list of priorities on the new Programmatic Review (to be discussed at Council on monday and tuesday).

pac

> From Richard.Wade@stfc.ac.uk Sat Jan 26 19:41:32 2008  
Subject: RE: Gemini announcement

Dear Paul

I think before this discussion goes much further, you should know the real sequence of events.

Back in November at the time of the last Gemini Board (or just before), we had received our CSR allocation and knew we had trouble. Given that the Gemini Board meeting was critical in terms of needing commitment to Aspen instruments, we contacted NSF and had a briefing telecon with them. We told them of our problems and that we would not be able to commit long term. We indicated that we were looking at having to withdraw but that we would want to negotiate so that the partnership and our reduced contributions could be agreed.

We notified our partners of the situation ahead of the Board. At the Board we did not give formal notice of withdrawal but indicated that we would have to if a new arrangement could not be found.

Unfortunately this confidential discussion was leaked to the US community and we were forced to go public.

Following the publication of the Delivery Plan we wrote to the Gemini Board on the 12th Dec laying out how we could offer MORE than just withdrawal and remain within the partnership at a reduced level (I could supply you with this letter if you wished as it might go some way toward demonstrating that we were genuinely trying to find a way forward). This offer would have resulted in MORE cash to Gemini than will now be the case. The response of the Board (to which we were not invited) was to deem, unilaterally that we had given notice of withdrawal (which we had not). It was clear to us that this would be made public very quickly and we decided that we had to make an announcement asap. Before doing so we contacted the President of the RAS and the Head of Department responsible for the UK Gemini Office to give them at least some warning.

I very much regret the actions of the Gemini Board who appear to have deliberately scuppered any possibility for further discussion or negotiation.

In parallel with all this our Programmatic Review has been taking place. Had the emerging conclusions been strongly supportive of Gemini we might have been in a position to challenge the Gemini Board's unilateral action. This is not the case however and we had to conclude that early withdrawal would be the only way to free up the funds to reinvest in higher priority items.

I fully appreciate the pain and anger that this situation is going to cause but I think people need be aware that the actions of the Gemini Board have been precipitative and have not allowed proper discussion or communication.

Richard