

current events

This section carries events of interest to the synchrotron radiation community. Works intended for this section should be sent direct to the Current-Events Editor (s.hasnain@dl.ac.uk).

Canadian Light Source gets approval for routine operations

Canada's synchrotron has received a licence from the Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission to commence routine operation, clearing the last regulatory hurdle before welcoming researchers to the \$173.5 million (US \$130 million) University of Saskatchewan owned national facility. The Canadian Light Source (CLS) is currently completing its first set of seven beamlines. The first call for proposals for research at the CLS will go out this autumn, with the first experiments expected to be underway by early 2005. CLS is described as one of the largest science projects in Canada for a few decades, and is planning a whole set of activities to coincide with its grand opening celebrations in October to inform the wider public of its planned activities and its future impact on society. CLS is a 2.9 GeV third-generation synchrotron radiation facility with a circumference of 170 m and ten usable straight sections with an emittance of 18 nm rad [see *J. Synchrotron Rad.* (2004), **11**, 214].

SPring-8 starts its top-up operation

The top-up operation of the SPring-8 storage ring started successfully earlier in the summer this year. In the top-up operation, electron beam is injected at short intervals during user beam time, and the current stored in the storage ring is kept constant. Accelerator physicists at SPring-8 have termed their top-up operation an 'ideal top-up operation' and is a culmination of six years of R&D work. Presently, the beam is injected at an interval of 1 min or 5 min in order to keep the stored current at 99 mA. The injection current for refilling is 30–40 μ A. The temporal variation of the stored current is about 0.1%.

Poland joins European synchrotron (ESRF)

Two weeks before becoming part of the European Union, Poland joined the ESRF as a Scientific Associate, at a level of 0.6% as regards financial contributions and scientific use. The category of Associate Member is a recent innovation. The original participation into ESRF was restricted to members contributing a minimum of 4% to the ESRF budget. Spain, Switzerland and Nordsync (a consortium of Nordic countries, namely Denmark, Finland, Norway and Sweden) contribute this minimum. The ESRF's agreement with Poland will last for two years (from July 2004 to June 2006). After that, it is likely that Poland may act as a catalyst in forming a Centralsync consortium with the Czech Republic and Hungary. In this way they could participate at a higher level so that they can become an observer on the Council, the body that makes decisions about important issues of ESRF policy. The Czech Republic and Hungary currently contribute 0.41% and 0.2%, respectively, to the ESRF budget.

The synchrotron community in Poland is already significant and its formal participation in the ESRF is bound to start a growth in the synchrotron radiation activities in Poland. They have already attempted to establish a national synchrotron radiation facility based on the 800 MeV Super-ACO. As we have seen, in countries such as Australia, Canada and Switzerland, participation in facilities abroad

has led in due course to countries building their own sources; it is only a matter of time before Centralsync could form the seed for another facility.

Australian synchrotron makes rapid progress

The \$206 million (US \$150 million) Australian synchrotron project has reached a significant milestone with the recent announcement of all major contracts for the synchrotron machine. These include a \$10.5 million contract with Toshiba International Corporation Ltd to supply the machine's radiofrequency (RF) system and \$39.4 million for building and associated facilities (Thiess). The Australian synchrotron is based on the Boomerang storage ring which has a double-bend achromat structure, a circumference of 216 m with 12 useable straight sections and an emittance of 7 nm rad. The storage ring will be fed by a full energy booster synchrotron that in turn will be fed by a 100 MeV linac. This is to be supplied by Danfysik for \$22.4 million as a turn-key injection system. The progress on building work has been rapid since the award of the building contract last year. The outer shell of the building is almost complete, as shown in the photograph below. The synchrotron is expected to open for users in 2007, as are Diamond in the UK and SOLEIL in France (2006) [see *J. Synchrotron Rad.* (2004), **11**, 366].



Outer shell of the Australian synchrotron building.

29th International Nathiagali Summer College focuses on light sources

The second week (5–10 July) of this year's Nathiagali Summer College was devoted to laser physics and advanced light sources. The first college was held in 1976 and was the brainchild of the late Professor Abdus Salam, who proposed the establishment of the college as an attempt to bridge the information gap between the north and south, the so-called north–south divide. These colleges have been organized annually by the Pakistan Atomic Energy Commission, the Higher-Education Commission and Quaid-I-Azam University, and are co-sponsored by the Abdus Salam International Centre for Theoretical Physics, Trieste, Italy. Recently it has also attracted support from the Chinese Academy of Sciences and CERN, among others. Over the years the college has attracted over 5200