

Professor John Womersley,  
Chief Executive Officer,  
Science and Technology Facilities  
Council,  
Rutherford Appleton Laboratory,  
Chilton, Didcot OX11 0QX.

25<sup>th</sup> April 2013

### ISIS Beamtime Allocation 2013-2014

Dear Professor Womersley,

I am writing to you in my capacity as Chairperson of the STFC Physical Sciences and Engineering Advisory Panel and as a member of the ISIS Facility Board to comment on the number of operational days presently allocated to ISIS for the forthcoming funding cycle (2013-2014?). I was in attendance at the recent Neutron and Muon Users meeting held at the University of Warwick and I was surprised and disappointed to hear you announce that ISIS would only be able to run for 60 days in the next funding period. I very much welcome your continued efforts to correct this anomaly and the purpose of this letter was to possibly provide some 'ammunition' that might help you in your difficult deliberations with BIS and RCUK.

Firstly, I thought it might be helpful to point out that the Physical Sciences and Engineering Advisory Panel have just recently submitted a report to the STFC Large Facilities Sub-Group (Chairperson: Dr Olwyn Byron), where a broad-based panel looked at the range of activities connected with a number of STFC managed facilities. The facilities included ISIS, Diamond, the Central Laser Facility, the Institut Laue-Langevin and the European Synchrotron Radiation Facility. Importantly, the Panel took a short-term (5 years) and medium-term (up to 30 years) perspective on topics inherently connected to a progressive agenda in the areas of physical science and engineering. Where possible, the report included examples of high impact science, which was thought to be important in maintaining a strong science base within the UK. The report was unanimously supported by the Panel.

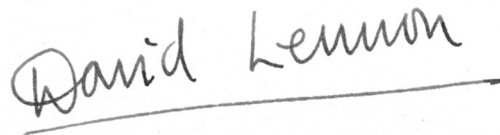
Amongst all of the wonderful science highlighted in the report, it is readily apparent firstly how unique ISIS is and, secondly, how pivotal it is in being able to deliver certain crucial scientific objectives that additionally possess real economic impact. Thus, this report, not published as yet, presents a reasonably balanced assessment of the importance of ISIS within the STFC portfolio of facilities. My thoughts were that this report might be helpful to you in convincing your RCUK colleagues on the need to back ISIS to the hilt and, moreover, on a long-term basis. I should note that the Panel additionally provided an assessment on possible options concerning the ESS. Even then, ISIS continued to shine and to deliver unique capability.

Finally, some comments from an ISIS Facility Board perspective. Since its insurgence, the Board has stipulated that 180 days operation was the minimum that should be tolerated to ensure the sustainability of the institution. This level of activity also represents optimum value for money. Whereas 120 days might represent an temporary stop-gap during difficult times, I am sure that my fellow Facility Board members would be appalled to learn that the present number of operational days is likely to be a mere 60. That allocation of resource is clearly insufficient.

I appreciate that it must be a challenging task for you to be endlessly battling for funds to support these expensive and valuable assets under your control. I hope that, in some small way, noting the perspective from a member of two STFC independent advisory bodies, strongly supportive of ISIS's management and ethos, might be of use to you at some time during your negotiations on institutional support.

If you think I could help matters in any way, please don't hesitate to get in touch. I fully support you in your endeavours and wish you good fortune.

Yours sincerely,



Dr David Lennon  
Reader

Cc: Professor Robert McGreevy, Director, ISIS Facility

## School of Chemistry

Joseph Black Building  
University Avenue,  
Glasgow,  
G12 8QQ, Scotland  
tel: +44 (0) 141 330 4708