



**Science & Technology
Facilities Council**

News from Science Board

September 2008

Science Board met on 4th September 2008 at the Medical Research Council, London. The main business items for the day concerned the developing Science and Technology Strategy for STFC. Science Board considered a draft set of assessment criteria around which future decisions for large investments may be made in a transparent fashion. Science Board also discussed visions and priorities for a number of 'big challenges' that have been identified. The 'big challenges' are important issues facing society in the next ten to fifteen years, that STFC and the science programme can help to address. The challenges include issues such as environment, energy, healthcare and security. The decision making criteria and 'big challenges' will feed into the emerging Science and Technology Strategy.

Science Board received reports from the chairs of PPAN and PALS. Since the last meeting of Science Board, PPAN have met once. At their meeting, PPAN received a report from the particle physics theory grant panel, and presentations on STFC's activities with the European Space Agency and on the MoonLITE project science case. PPAN also received PPRP feedback on a number of nuclear physics projects proposals. In order to make informed decisions, PPAN decided to convene a special meeting on 8th September 2008 to consider the projects. PPAN also developed five overarching science questions which will feed into the Science and Technology Strategy.

PALS have not met since the last meeting of Science Board. In the intervening period, the chair and deputy have been progressing with a number of different issues including the New Light Source science case; developing interactions with other research councils to identify facility needs; and considering the process for reviewing the proposed Vulcan upgrade.

Science Board also received an information update on the Science and Technology Gateway Centres. More information on the gateway centres can be found here <http://www.stfc.ac.uk/ResFac/Gateway/GatewayCentres.aspx>.