



NEWS! From the **NAVAL OBSERVATORY**

U.S. NAVAL OBSERVATORY

3450 MASSACHUSETTS AVE., NW

WASHINGTON, DC 20392-5420

**U.S. Naval Observatory
Press Release**

2014 March 12

**Geoff Chester
USNO Public Affairs Office
(202) 762-1438
geoff.chester@navy.mil**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Dr. Brian Luzum named as new Scientific Director, USNO

Dr. Brian Luzum has been named as the new Scientific Director of the U.S. Naval Observatory (USNO), succeeding Dr. Kenneth J. Johnston as the Observatory's chief scientist. Dr. Johnston retired at the end of 2012.

The announcement was made by USNO Superintendent CAPT Brian Connon, USN, at an all-hands meeting on February 19. He becomes the fifth person to hold the position since it was established in 1958.

Brian Luzum began his career at the U.S. Naval Observatory in 1982 working as a volunteer in the Time Service Department while still in high school. His initial tasks included assisting in the operation of the photographic zenith tube (PZT) and investigations into radio astronomy source stability. Throughout high school and college, Brian continued to work summer and winter breaks, eventually as a paid part-time employee.

After obtaining his B.S. in physics and mathematics from Iowa State University in 1987, Brian started full-time employment at USNO in the Earth Orientation Division of the Time Service Department. His initial work was the investigation into the use of a weighted cubic spline for combining Earth orientation parameters (EOPs), a method that is still used operationally at USNO today. Additional tasks that were picked up in the ensuing years included various analyses of Earth orientation parameters and investigations into the prediction of EOPs.

In 1991, Brian entered USNO's professional development program, which enabled him to earn his M.S. in Civil Engineering (Geodesy) from Iowa State University in 1993. In 1994, the Earth Orientation Parameter work was split from the Time Service Department to form a separate Earth Orientation Department. In 1996, Brian became the program lead for the EOP prediction program, taking on full responsibility for the prediction of EOPs.

At the end of 2001, Brian left USNO to pursue a Ph.D. in Civil Engineering (Geodesy) at the University of Florida. After completing his dissertation "Analysis of the Stability of Features and Separability in Airborne Laser Swath Mapping Data in Novel Feature Space" in 2004, he was

employed by two contractors working on airborne laser mapping and geodetic reference frames respectively.

In 2005, Dr. Luzum returned to work for the Earth Orientation Department at USNO, this time in the VLBI Operations Division, also taking on the responsibility of the co-director of the International Earth Rotation and Reference Systems Service (IERS) Conventions. In 2007, he was selected as the Chief of the EOP Combination and Prediction Division. In 2009, he was selected as the Head of the Earth Orientation Department.

Dr. Luzum is the director of the IERS Rapid Service/Prediction Center and the co-director of the IERS Conventions Center. He is a member of the International Astronomical Union (IAU), American Geophysical Union, American Astronomical Society, Institute of Navigation, Sigma Xi, and Phi Beta Kappa. He has been selected as the chair of the IAU Working Group on Numerical Standards for Fundamental Astronomy and the co-chair of the IERS Combination of Predictions Pilot Project.

Previous Scientific Directors of the USNO have been Dr. Gerald Clemence (1958 – 1963), Dr. Kaj Strand (1963 – 1977), Dr. Gert Westerhout (1977 – 1993), and Dr. Kenneth Johnston (1993 – 2012).