



(NGC 3311). The white contours are from a recent high-resolution image obtained at 13 cm with the Australia Telescope; the radio source appears, however, not to be resolved. The CCD image is a 250 s exposure obtained in B band at the AAT.

(Right) Abell 3444 ($z = 0.254$) is one of the most distant clusters in the present sample. At the survey resolution, the X-ray image is point-like. The radio emission is probably slightly extended to the north (which should not be confused with the natural N-S elongation of the beam). Both X-ray and radio intensities are high: $\sim 3 \times 10^{45}$ erg s $^{-1}$ and $\log P(\text{W Hz}^{-1}) = 24.4$ respectively, and clearly centred on the cluster dominant galaxy. The exact coincidence observed here appears to occur in many of the cluster fields, especially for the high redshift clusters in the sample. The CCD image is a 3-minute EFOSC exposure in R band.

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The VLT Site at Paranal: September 1994

The centrefold of "The Messenger" shows an aerial view of Cerro Paranal, the site of ESO's Very Large Telescope. This photo was obtained in mid-September 1994 and shows the rapid developments at the time of the construction of the concrete base for the four telescope enclosures. Also visible is the complex infrastructure for the various associated laboratories. This work is being done by the Skanska/Belfi consortium. The installations for the technical equipment can be seen to the left.

The blasting work is now finished and excavations for the various connecting tunnels are clearly visible; they will be covered again when the concrete work is ready. To the right, the work on the base for Unit Telescope no. 1 is already well underway and in September reached the "floor level" on which the enclosure will be placed. The basement concrete floor on which the coudé focus for Telescope no. 2 will be installed is in place, and the concrete work will soon start in the holes for Telescopes 3 and 4.

To the extreme right and a little lower than the rest of the platform are the excavations for the control building. The platform altitude is about 2640 metres above sea level and it measures about 150 metres across. The width of the access road is no less than 12 metres, i.e. nearly equal to that of a three-lane highway; this is necessary to ensure the safe transport of all telescope parts to the top, especially the four 8.2-m fragile mirrors.

In October 1994, the first shipment of steel parts of this enclosure (manufactured by the SEBIS consortium) with a total weight of more than 100 tons left Europe for the sea journey to Chile. While the smaller parts were packed in large containers, special packing was necessary for the very large structures. The ship left the port of Marghera, Italy, and is expected to dock in Antofagasta towards the end of December 1994, after which the parts will be transported by truck to the top of Paranal.

This first shipment will be soon followed by others. It is expected that consignments of about 100 tons each will be sent to Chile over the next eight months. The enclosure erection will start in January 1995 and will be completed in about 8 weeks.

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