



## AMATEUR ASTRONOMER

An Amateur Astronomer is responsible for setting up and operating one of the many Perth Observatory telescopes during a Night Sky Tour (NST) whilst presenting entertaining information to the public. Most of this work is for public night tours, but some may be for day tours, special night tour events or outside events.

### Commitment:

- Twice a month for a tour
- One training meeting per month following the initial training period.
- Minimum of 30 hours per year
- Regular communication is necessary particularly if unable to attend a rostered shift.

### Responsibilities:

- Unpack and set up the designated telescope.
- Choose, set up and focus suitable eyepiece for the target.
- Welcome group (The public is divided into Alpha, Beta, Gamma and Delta groups)
- Explain how to view the target through the eyepiece.
- Explain and be cognisant of safety aspects of the dome and telescope usage.
- Describe allocated objects and related basic astronomy concepts.
- Talk about telescope, mount, GoTo, star catalogues etc.
- Answer questions as needed.
- Pack up the telescope at end of the tour.
- Regular NST Telescopes include:
  - 12.5" Calver (manual)
  - 14" Meade LX200-ACF (GoTo)
  - 16" Meade LX200 EMC (GoTo)
  - 11" Celestron CPC 1100 (GoTo)
  - 30" Obsession (GoTo)
- Other NST Telescopes:
  - 12" Meade LX200 (GoTo)
  - 10" and 8" SkyWatcher Dobsonians (manual, field nights)
  - 8" Celestron Pantograph (manual - not regularly used)
  - 10" SkyWatcher Newtonian (GoT- not regularly used)

### Skills:

- Confidence in public speaking to small groups or willingness to learn.
- Basic knowledge of Astronomy and our solar system.
- Ability to climb small ladders if needed.
- Previous knowledge of how to operate a telescope is handy but not required as we provide training.
- Ability to follow correct procedures to ensure the safety and longevity of the telescopes.





### Training:

For some trainee volunteers, it can take several months to become competent enough to operate a telescope skilfully. A very important requirement is to be able to speak about telescope objects and general astronomy with a small group of tour participants. A short but intensive training period of 4 weeks is followed by a mentoring approach where the Trainee works with a certified Amateur Astronomer.

### Certification:

An Amateur Astronomer can work without supervision when s/he can:

Skilfully operate at least one manual telescope and one GoTo telescope and has used and is familiar with the other NST telescopes in use.

Describe and explain the significance of the most common target objects (moon, planets, nebulae, open clusters, globular clusters, galaxies and other formations)

Assessment is by the recommendation of two NST Hosts that a trainee meets these requirements to the Training Subcommittee and that the Trainee feels comfortable with the responsibility.

### Further Progression:

Amateur Astronomers should aim to achieve Senior Telescope Operator (STO) status with further and wider experience. It is recommended, though not mandatory, that STO is achieved before Night Tour Host training is attempted.

