

**Maunakea Observatories: Media  
Statement**

*July 29, 2019*

*The following statement may be attributed to Jessica Dempsey, deputy director, East Asian Observatory:*

Contrary to recent reports, the Maunakea Observatories have not made a deal with activists for ongoing access to our telescope facilities.

Since the Maunakea Observatories' directors made the joint decision to remove all remaining personnel from Maunakea on Tuesday, July 16, there has been no consistent staff presence at our telescope facilities to provide the kind of regular maintenance required by our complex systems and delicate instrumentation.

We continue to closely monitor the health of our telescopes remotely from our base facilities. As issues that are critically time-sensitive are identified for technology that is at risk of significant damage, the Observatories notify law enforcement and the Office of Maunakea Management. If law enforcement tells the Observatories that our staff will not be blocked from entering and exiting the Maunakea Access Road, the Observatory directors carefully assess the situation and, if the safety risk is determined to be low, send a small crew of the smallest number of technicians needed to successfully complete the work required.

These efforts are urgent technical work required to prevent irreversible damage to the telescopes and instruments. With the current level of access, the Observatories are still unable to resume operations.

For regular operations, our observatories need safe, consistent access to our facilities for not only technicians, but all of our staff -- and our local contractors and vendors -- in order to keep our facilities functional.

The Maunakea Observatories continue to support the efforts of state and county law enforcement to restore safe and reliable conditions on the Maunakea Access Road.