

Letter to Eastman Kodak

Mr. Gordon Brown
Professional Imaging
U.S. Marketing Operations
Eastman Kodak Company
343 State Street
Rochester, NY 14650, U.S.A.

January 24, 1994

Dear Gordon,

Thank you for your letter of January 4, 1994, in reply to the Resolution about Kodak products which was passed by the participants of IAU Symposium 161 last year. Your comments provide a clear statement about Kodak's intentions in our field of science which, though sad, is very welcome.

The long history of association between your company and the astronomical community has clearly been most successful and mutually beneficial, and has ensured until recently ready availability of those special products that continue to be essential for wide-field astronomical work. Regrettably, however, this is obviously no longer the case and, as you realize, the present Resolution is a loud expression of the current, deep worries of our colleagues and ourselves.

The message of your letter is clear: we may count on having *IIIa-J* and *IIIa-F* emulsion on-glass available until further notice, but all other traditional 'astronomical' Kodak emulsions already have been or will soon be discontinued. We will have the red-sensitive *Kodak Tech-Pan* on-glass and on-film and provided the announced 'low-level' experiments are successful, we may also get a blue-sensitive *Tech-Pan* emulsion on-glass.

The most regrettable loss to astronomers is undoubtedly the future lack of any Kodak materials for the 'V-' and 'I-' bands, which means abandoning wide-field work in these two, astrophysically important wavebands, originally provided by the 'D' and 'N' sensitized materials.

Various long-term projects are now being prematurely discontinued because of this. Moreover, some astronomers, especially the astrometrists, are deploring the lack of II-a type emulsions which were particularly useful for their type of work.

It may be a small consolation that un-hypered IV-N lasts some years at low temperature and that the major users of this emulsion may be able to stock enough plates to complete the current northern and southern sky surveys before this, too, is discontinued.

We know of other suppliers of photographic emulsions which have expressed interest in developing and marketing some of these emulsions, but this may take some time to become effective. However, in view of the importance to astronomy, we are presently exploring these avenues on behalf of the world-wide community of photographic astronomers.

We look forward to testing any new Kodak products that appear, and ask if Ms. Barbara Seils is the person with whom we should continue this dialogue, or if you personally will continue to address technical queries from astronomers.

In this connection, we should like to inform you that Dave Malin will be in the U.S.A. in June 1994 and would welcome a meeting with interested parties at Kodak in Rochester, if that would be useful.

With kind regards,

DAVID MALIN
Section Leader (Photography)
IAU Working Group on Wide-field Imaging

RICHARD M. WEST
Chairman