What is the Designated Visitor Mode (dVM)

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What is the designated Visitor Mode (dVM)?

Designated Visitor Mode (dVM) observations allow the users to carry out observations as in Visitor Mode (VM) but without travelling to Paranal. Designated VM observations on Paranal are scheduled on specific dates/slots as if they were regular Visitor Mode runs. The observations are executed by an ESO staff member, in close contact (e.g., via Skype) with the Principal Investigator, or someone the PI designates to serve as the liaison with the Observatory. The web-based tool POEM (Paranal Observatory Eavesdropping Mode) is offered to follow target acquisitions on the instrument workstations, but does not allow direct interactions with the observations and data. More information:
https://www.eso.org/sci/facilities/paranal/sciops/designated-visitor-information.html

Below you can find few FAQ about dVM:

- **Why should I prepare the observing material at least 10 days before the run?**
  Answer: In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Observatory has implemented a Restricted Operations mode with less than half of the usual staff at the observatory site. An early submission of the minimal observing material (a README with contact information for observers, at least one complete OB) is necessary given the limited on site staffing, and it will be reviewed by colleagues at USD. We want to make sure that there is no missing information at the beginning of the dVM run and observations can successfully be executed by the staff on site.

- **Will I be reminded about the upcoming dVM run?**
  Answer: Automatic reminders are going to be sent starting about 20 days before the run and until your pre-run material is approved by USD.

- **What are the key information to be put in the README?**
  Answer: The README file MUST contain the contact information for observers [First+Last name and email (mandatory), phone number and skype contact (optional)] in the General Description section. Please, note if the observations require a non-standard setup or special calibrations.

- **Who should I contact for questions?**
  Answer: Please use this webpage to contact USD for any question related to your run until 3-5 days before its start.
- **Who will be the night astronomer for my run?**
  Answer: The night astronomer will contact you at sunset and discuss the observation plan
  (see: http://www.eso.org/sci/bin/skycalendar?site=v&year=2021&ms=1&me=12 for sunset)
- **What if my observations are less than a full night?**
  Answer: You can discuss the exact schedule when contacted by your night astronomer at sunset.

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