

Investigation of the Collapse of the Arecibo Telescope in Puerto Rico

Habib Tabatabai

University of Wisconsin – Milwaukee

Abstract

The Arecibo Telescope in Puerto Rico was built in 1963. The telescope included a cable-supported platform that was suspended approximately 150 meters above a 305-meter spherical dish. A set of structural cables supported the platform by connecting it to three towers located around the dish. One of the cables failed on August 10, 2020, leading to the final collapse of this major structure on December 1, 2020. This presentation summarizes the findings of a committee formed by the U.S. National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine to review and explain the factors and probable causes contributing to this collapse.