

DIVISION XII

UNION-WIDE ACTIVITIES

ACTIVITÉS D'INTÉRÊT GÉNÉRAL DE L'UAI

Division XII consists of Commissions that formerly were organized under the Executive Committee, that concern astronomers across a wide range of scientific sub-disciplines and provide interactions with scientists in a wider community, including governmental organizations, outside the IAU.

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DIVISION XII COMMISSIONS

Commission 5

Documentation and Astronomical Data

Commission 6

Astronomical Telegrams

Commission 14

Atomic and Molecular Data

Commission 41

History of Astronomy

Commission 46

Astronomy Education and Development

Commission 50

**Protection of Existing and Potential Observatory
Sites**

Commission 55

Communicating Astronomy with the Public

INTER-DIVISION X-XII WORKING GROUP

Inter-Division X-XII WG Historic Radio Astronomy

TRIENNIAL REPORT 2006 - 2009

1. Introduction

After the addition of Commission 55 at the IAU XXVI General Assembly in Prague, 2006, Division XII now consists of seven IAU Commissions. The first six had remained outside the IAU Division structure when it was created in 1994, because their activities did not fit comfortably into any of the eleven initial Divisions which are organised by scientific or technical discipline.

The activities of these seven Commissions cut across the full range of scientific sub-disciplines – comets to cosmology – but also deal with important policy interfaces to the outside world which are important for astronomy and for the IAU as a whole – e.g., data access rights, science education and outreach, and protection of the environment. Recognising this unifying theme, the IAU XXV General Assembly created Division XII during

its meetings in Sydney, 2003, on the proposal of the Executive Committee. Light pollution control is an example of one of the Division's Commissions at work (Commission 50) and is currently featured in the 'Themes' highlighted on the IAU home page <www.iau.org>. The 'Themes' section comprises 'the most popular topics in astronomy and most frequently asked questions that the IAU Press Office has received over the years'. The work of Commission 55 is a particularly significant, Union-Wide activity during the *International Year of Astronomy 2009*, along with the underpinning role of Commission 46 and its Program Groups. The *IYA* also offers a special opportunity to showcase the work of Commission 41. For more on the *IYA2009*, visit <www.astronomy2009.org>.

For further details of Division activities, visit the Division XII web site <<http://www.iaudivisionxii.org/>>.

2. Reports of Commissions and Working Groups

The detailed reports and projected activities, for the period September 2006 - August 2009, of most of the above-listed individual Commissions, along with those of their Working Groups and Programme Groups, follow below. These include a variety of conferences and meeting activities. An effort has been made to cross-fertilize the efforts of Commissions 41, 45, 50 and 55 in their support activities for *IYA2009*, following the lead of the IAU Executive Committee Working Group.

Malcolm G. Smith
president of the Division