

## DIVISION XII / COMMISSION 6 / SERVICE CENTRAL BUREAU FOR ASTRONOMICAL TELEGRAMS

DIRECTOR Daniel W. E. Green  
ASSISTANT DIRECTOR Gareth V. Williams

### TRIENNIAL REPORT 2006 - 2009

#### 1. Introduction

There were 401 *IAU Circulars* and 1248 *Central Bureau Electronic Telegrams (CBETs)* issued during the triennium 2005-2008:

<i>Dates</i>	<i>Circulars</i>	<i>CBETs</i>
2005 July-Dec.	Nos. 8556-8652	Nos. 175-345
2006 Jan.-June	Nos. 8653-8727	Nos. 346-565
2006 July-Dec.	Nos. 8728-8789	Nos. 566-791
2007 Jan.-June	Nos. 8790-8853	Nos. 792-989
2007 July-Dec.	Nos. 8854-8906	Nos. 990-1189
2008 Jan.-June	Nos. 8907-8956	Nos. 1190-1422

#### 2. CBETs

This was the second Triennium in which the Central Bureau issued electronic-only *CBETs* to aid in the rapid dissemination of reports. Only 174 *CBETs* had been issued in the 2002-2005 Triennium, but they evolved into a full supplemental and complementary publication to the *Circulars* during this past Triennium, reflecting the move toward electronic publication and away from printed publication.

#### 3. CBETs and Circulars

It is the intention that all items requiring designation by the Central Bureau (supernovae, novae, comets, solar-system satellites) continue to be noted on the printed *Circulars*; supernovae are now published almost entirely on *CBETs*, due to their great numbers and to the unfortunate lack of financial support from many in the supernova community (though a few supernova researchers continue to be long-time supporters of the CBAT through their paid subscriptions), but summaries of newly announced supernovae have been published later on the *Circulars* with citation to the specific *CBETs*.

#### 4. Distribution

Subscribers may receive the *Circulars* in printed and/or electronic form, the latter being available by e-mail or by logging in to the Computer Service, either directly on

the Bureau's computers or via the World Wide Web. Since 1997, the *Circulars* have been made freely available at the CBAT website, but following complaints by paying subscribers, the general delay in posting for non-subscribers is now about one year (expanded in late 2004 from the previous 4-6 weeks). The *CBETs* are also posted at the CBAT website, with the earlier *CBETs* also available freely (and, like the *Circulars*, are indexed via the web-based bibliographic *Astrophysics Data System* (ADS), the ostensible replacement to the now-defunct *Astronomy and Astrophysics Abstracts* series).

## 5. Funding

Funding is currently being sought to allow the CBAT to post all electronic *Circulars* and *CBETs* freely. A step in this direction was thankfully accomplished with the help of the U.S. National Science Foundation's accepting a proposal to fund the CBAT at a 50% level beginning in February 2008. Great additional effort is being expended by the CBAT Director to seek alternate – and more extensive and long-lasting – sources of income, including from international sources.

The number of subscriptions to the printed *Circulars* was around 125 at the end of June 2008, continuing the slow decline (which peaked around 800 in the 1990s). The number of subscribers to the joint Computer Service of the CBAT and the *Minor Planet Center* (MPC) has remained relatively stable, though it too slowly declined by about 10% in the last triennium (to around 435 in June 2008). There, nonetheless, continues to be considerable interest to maintain having a printed copy of the *Circulars*, though subscription rates may need to increase to cover the increasing costs of printing and postage.

## 6. Supernovae and comets

Supernovae and comets have continued to dominate the activities of the *Bureau*, as related in the annual reports of the Bureau as published in the *IAU Information Bulletins* and made available at the Commission 6 website <[cfa-www.harvard.edu/iau/Commission6.html](http://cfa-www.harvard.edu/iau/Commission6.html)>. The pattern continues regarding increasing numbers of comet discoveries from NEO surveys being first reported as objects of asteroidal appearance, where they are often posted on the MPC's 'NEO Confirmation' web page because of their unusual motion – follow-up observations then showing some of the objects to be of cometary appearance. The working link between the CBAT and MPC continues to be highly useful in the joint announcement of such objects.

## 7. The CBAT web site

The CBAT has expanded its website over the past triennium to include much information regarding supernovae, novae, comets, satellites of solar-system planets, etc., – a snapshot of which can be gleaned from the 'Headlines' web page <[cfa-www.harvard.edu/iau/Headlines.html](http://cfa-www.harvard.edu/iau/Headlines.html)>. Plans are underway to complete the availability of all *IAUCs* back to No. 1 at the CBAT website, and to provide better indexing of the on-line *Circulars* and to provide flexibility for subscribers in terms of what sorts of *CBETs* and/or *IAUCs* they would like to receive by subject or type of object. The CBAT Director interacts with members of numerous other Commissions at the triennial IAU General Assemblies and during the course of the triennium by e-mail in efforts to increase the value of the CBAT to all astronomers, and all scientists are encouraged to dialogue with

the CBAT Director regarding how the work of the CBAT can be more useful to their own work.

## 8. Amateur astronomers

Amateur astronomers in numerous countries are finding more supernovae during dedicated CCD surveys, and amateurs still dominate in finding Galactic novae. Their help with follow-up observations (astrometry, photometry) of new comets, novae and supernovae is also appreciated by the CBAT. The *IAU Circulars* have continued to serve as the official announcement medium for the annual Edgar Wilson Award for amateur discoveries of comets.

## 9. Refereeing

Since the *IAU Circulars* are in fact refereed (to a greater extent than many contributors realize), the CBAT benefits from consultation with members of Commission 6 in their various areas of astronomical expertise, as well as referees from the general astronomical community.

Daniel W. E. Green  
*director of the Bureau*