

## PROPOSAL FOR CENTRALIZATION OF INFORMATION CONCERNING PLATE VAULTS

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The replies to the questionnaire of the Working Group on Astronomical Data (IAU Commission 5) were favourable to centralization of information concerning plate vaults. Some observatories have a file recording the plates which is usable by computer and some publish their lists regularly, for example, the Haute-Provence Observatory and the Tokyo Astronomical Observatory (Kiso Information Bulletin). Thus we have a basis to start centralizing this information. However, the most important task will be to enable other observatories to participate also in this collaboration. Bearing this in mind, I propose that the "central file" contains, at least at the beginning, only the minimum of information necessary.

I have attempted to define this minimum and propose that we keep, for the spectra, the following items:

- a) object identification: HD or BD or ...  
It will also be necessary to foresee the identification of objects such as comets, planetary nebulae, small planets, etc.
- b)  $(\alpha, \delta)$
- c)  $m_v$
- d) UT date and LST or Julian date
- e) plate designation

For the Schmidt plates I would propose

- a)  $(\alpha, \delta)$  of the centre
- b) angular size
- c) UT date and LST or Julian date
- d) direct image or objective prism, filter
- e) plate designation

This information is perhaps insufficient and could be completed by further details, for example, for the Schmidt plates the limiting

magnitude, emulsion and exposure time. This matter is open for discussion.

I now wish to mention briefly my opinion regarding the location of this information. It has been suggested that the Stellar Data Center could act as "centralizer" of this information. This center has undoubtedly been very successful in astronomical data retrieval and it would be a guarantee of our success if it were possible to arrange something with Strasbourg. On the other hand, some observatories answered favourably to our question and in view of their geographical location I think that the best solution would be to have the master file here at Strasbourg which would be updated regularly by information received from each observatory and copies could be held at Harvard Observatory and the Anglo-Australian Observatory. Both these observatories already have files usable by computer. This is also a matter for present discussion.