

6. ASTRONOMICAL TELEGRAMS
(TÉLÉGRAMMES ASTRONOMIQUES)
(Committee of the Executive Committee)

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INTRODUCTION

On 22 October 1922 IAU *Circular* No. 1 was issued from the Copenhagen Observatory by Elis Strömrgren; on 20 October 1947 J. M. Vinter Hansen issued *Circular* No. 1112; and on 20 October 1972 *Circular* No. 2452 was issued from the Smithsonian Astrophysical Observatory by Brian G. Marsden. As is clear from the report below, the 50-year average of some 50 *Circulars* per year has been consistently exceeded in recent years, although in view of the tremendous growth in astronomical activity generally, this should scarcely be surprising. I am strongly impressed by this long and continuous cooperation among astronomers around the world, and it is a great pleasure for me to express my appreciation to all who have contributed to the activity of the Central Bureau.

Sadly, the date of the publication of the 50th-anniversary *Circular* was also that of the death of Harlow Shapley. Dr Shapley served as a member of Commission 6 for thirty years and was the initiator of the series of *Harvard Announcement Cards*, a subsidiary organ of the Central Bureau from 1926 until the Bureau was transferred from Copenhagen to Cambridge, Mass., at the end of 1964.

P. SIMON

President of the Commission

REPORT OF THE CENTRAL BUREAU FOR ASTRONOMICAL TELEGRAMS

The high level of activity of the preceding triennium was maintained – even surpassed – during 1970–72. This is especially reflected in the number of *Circulars* published, and it seems that we must now expect to publish more than 80 each year. A one-page and a two-page *Circular* are frequently distributed together, however, and the actual number of occasions on which *Circulars* were issued was not too substantially greater than during 1967–69. The number of ‘telegram books’ distributed has in fact been noticeably fewer. The statistics concerning the telegram books and the occasions on which *Circulars* were issued are:

	Telegrams	<i>Circulars</i>
1970	40	61 (Nos. 2197–2297)
1971	29	55 (Nos. 2298–2379)
1972	38	63 (Nos. 2380–2475)

The disparity between number of telegrams and number of *Circulars* must mainly be attributed to the fact that relatively few bright comets were discovered. To be sure, the year 1970 produced three spectacular naked-eye comets and four others easily visible with small telescopes; but, in addition,