COMMISSIONS 27 AND 42 OF THE IAU
INFORMATION BULLETIN ON VARIABLE STARS
Number unnumbered

Konkoly Observatory
Budapest
10 March 1998

HU ISSN 0374 – 0676

THE ASTRONOMICAL ALMANAC TO BE REVISED

ALAN D. FIALA

Chief, Nautical Almanac Office Astronomical Applications Department
U. S. Naval Observatory, 3450 Massachusetts Avenue N.W., Washington, DC 20392-5420
Telephone: (202) 762-1496, FAX: (202) 762-1612, email: adf@newcomb.usno.navy.mil

Users worldwide rely on The Astronomical Almanac as a key source of essential, fundamental astronomical data. This annual volume is a joint publication of the Astronomical Applications Department of the U.S. Naval Observatory and H.M. Nautical Almanac Office of the Royal Greenwich Observatory. Both offices are now conducting a thorough review of the content and format of the publication, with the goal of making it more relevant to modern users. Some of the proposed changes include:

- adoption of the International Celestial Reference System (ICRS);
- introduction of a more modern ephemeris of the solar system to replace DE200/LE200;
- provision of a companion CD-ROM to the printed book;
- removal of outdated sub-sections.

The entire contents of the book are being reviewed item by item. Some tabular data may be removed entirely. Other data may be moved to the CD-ROM, or may be replaced or complemented by software which can calculate, then display or print those data. The changes are expected to be introduced into the edition for 2002.

In order to assess the needs of the users of The Astronomical Almanac, a survey is being conducted by the two offices. The survey is available on the World Wide Web at http://www.ast.cam.ac.uk/nao/survey.html. Unless the users of The Astronomical Almanac make their needs known in detail, decisions on the changes will be entirely at the discretion of the production staff. Therefore, all users are strongly encouraged to take the time necessary to complete the survey. The survey will close on 1 August 1998. Early responses will be more effective in influencing the planning.

If a user has no access to the World Wide Web, an abbreviated paper version of the survey may be obtained by writing to the

U.S. Naval Observatory,
Astronomical Applications Department,
3450 Massachusetts Avenue NW,
Washington, DC, 20392-5420.