

Editorials

Special Letters Edition: First Science with the ODIN satellite

On February 20, 2001, a combined submillimeter/millimeter Astronomy and Aeronomy space mission was launched: the ODIN satellite. It presents a collaboration between Sweden, Canada, Finland and France, and is designed to study line profiles in the frequency range 486–581 GHz and at 118.75 GHz.

The Editors of Astronomy & Astrophysics recognize the importance of this event and present, in the present issue of Astronomy & Astrophysics, a special Letters Issue on the ODIN satellite. The 11 letters describe the basic features of the satellite and its instruments, and present first scientific results achieved with it.

P. Schneider, C. Bertout and H.J. Habing,
Editors

Remark on impact factor

There is the widespread impression that Astronomy & Astrophysics has a smaller impact, as measured by citations to its articles, than some of the other major astronomy journals. This impression is apparently supported by the Journal Citation Report (JCR), which is prepared annually by the ISI Web of Knowledge; in the JCR statistics, A&A indeed shows a considerably lower *impact factor* than some of the other main journals in the field.

The Board of Directors of Astronomy & Astrophysics has now received information from the ISI Web of Knowledge that the impact factor statistics is seriously flawed. Owing to the short abbreviation (A&A) with which articles in Astronomy & Astrophysics are usually cited, and the possible non-uniqueness of this abbreviation among the scientific journals covered by the JCR, these are not counted. A similar situation occurred with The Astrophysical Journal, for which the three-letter abbreviation (ApJ) had been considered too challenging. After accounting for citations with ApJ, the impact factor of The Astrophysical Journal increased by more than a factor of two from 2000 to 2001.

After contacting the ISI Web of Knowledge, the Chairman of the Board of Directors was assured that the situation will be changed, and that in the future, the abbreviation A&A will be counted for the citations. In-house studies at the ISI Web of Knowledge have shown that very little confusion arises through this, and, more importantly, after accounting for these citations, the impact factor of Astronomy & Astrophysics becomes comparable to that of the other major astronomy journals.

Aa. Sandqvist,
Chairman of the Board of Directors