ASTEROIDS PT1

In 2010, the 1) _____ defence team at NASA 2) _____ and logged 90 per cent of the asteroids near Earth measuring 1km 3) _____ . These 'near-Earth objects', or NEOs, are the 4) _____ of mountains and include anything 5) _____ 50M 6) _____ of Earth's orbit. With an estimated 50 left to 7) _____ , NASA says none of the 887 it knows 8) _____ are a significant danger to the 9) _____ .

Now NASA 10) _____ towards logging some of the 11) _____ asteroids, those measuring 140 metres 12) _____ or more. Of the 25.000 13) _____ asteroids of this size, so far about 8.000 14) _____ , leaving 17.000 unaccounted 15) _____ . Considering that a 19-metre asteroid that exploded 16) _____ the city of Chelyabinsk in Russia in 2013 17) _____ 1.200 people, these middle-sized asteroids 18) _____ a serious danger if they 19) _____ Earth's orbit.

20) _____ NASA can find the remaining middle-sized NEOs 21) _____ on getting the 22) _____ to build NEOCam, a 0.5-metre space telescope which would use infrared light to 23) _____ asteroids. If it did get the 24) _____ , it could probably 25) _____ its goal in ten years. Once logged, the 26) _____ defence team would still need to 27) _____ how to defend the planet 28) _____ being hit by the truly 29) _____ asteroids – the PHAs.