comitatibus A.B.C. et D. capiendas'. In ensuing years the first part of the phrase varied considerably. 'Assisas, juratas et attinctas' was a frequent alternative to 'assisas, juratas et recogniciones'; while in the commissions of 23 Aug. 1285 under Stat. Westminster II c. 30, and for some years afterwards the phrase used was 'assisas, juratas et inquisiciones'. 'Assisas, juratas et certificaciones' seems to have been introduced generally for the commissions issued in 1293 under the Statute 'De Justiciariis Assignatis'. It seems to have soon become the standardised formula. The second part of the phrase remained in its form of 1273 until 1285, with a considerable number of variants designed to extend the justices' jurisdiction to assizes arraigned before other named justices. The phrase 'coram quibuscumque justiciariis nostris in comitatibus A.B.C. and D. arramias' seems to have been first introduced in the commissions of 23 Aug. 1285, in order to meet the difficulties caused by variations among the circuit commissioners, and to give newly appointed commissioners a general jurisdiction over all assizes outstanding in the counties of their circuit. The phrase 'tam ... quam', to continue the validity of writs and particular commissions obtained under a new king's immediate predecessor, does not seem to have been employed in the years following 1307 and 1327, but further research is needed to confirm this. It may, therefore, have been introduced in 1377; similar phrases were employed in 1399, 1413 and 1422. Under Richard II, though omitted, apparently by inadvertence, in some of the earlier commissions and subsidiary instruments, it was continued long after all the assizes outstanding from Edward III's reign must have been determined, to disappear rather raggedly in the 1390s.

The six circuits were those established by the commissions of 19 Dec. 1330 under the act 4 Edward III c. 2, with two later modifications: in 1332 cos. Nottingham and Derby were transferred from the Northern to the Midland circuit; between 1354 and 1359 cos. Berks and Oxford were transferred from the South-Western to the Western circuit, though it seems that for a short period on either side of the change they were covered by separate commissions, issued first to the commissioners of the one circuit and then to those of the other.

The remaining clauses were adopted from those used in the special assize commissions between the 1220s and 1270s. Their phraseology can be paralleled almost exactly by that used in commissions of the 1230s and 1240s when, usually owing to interruptions in eyre programmes, justices were appointed to take all the pending eyre assizes in one or two counties. The last clause, 'mandavimus', refers to two instruments whose originals are common in circuit Assize files and whose contents under Richard II are usually summarized in the sessional headings of circuit Assize Rolls. The first is the 'venire facias' or 'de intendendo' writ, as Chancery clerks called it, which normally issued from the Chancery to the sheriff of each county in the circuit, under the same date as the commission, ordering the