



THE SECRETARY OF COMMERCE

Executive Registry

77-5463

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DDI # 2988-77

Dear Admiral Turner:

The Metric Conversion Act of 1975 (P.L. 94-168) declares a national policy to coordinate and plan the increasing use of the metric system in the United States, and to establish a United States Metric Board to coordinate voluntary conversion to the metric system. Section 6(1) of that Act requires the U.S. Metric Board to consult with and take into account the views, interests, and metric conversion costs of Federal agencies.

Since the Federal Government is an important participant in the metrication effort, I believe that an interagency committee should be established to provide appropriate Federal coordination and policy guidance in metric activities, and to serve as liaison with the U.S. Metric Board. Such coordination and liaison in the public interest can minimize uncertainty and confusion concerning metric change-over plans of the Federal Government, thereby eliminating unnecessary expenditures and other economic wastes both by Federal agencies and by non-Federal agencies whose metric plans need to be coordinated with those agencies. In short, such an interagency committee would serve to increase the benefit/cost ratio of U.S. voluntary conversion to metric usage.

As background, the Interagency Committee on Standards Policy (ICSP), which is chartered and chaired by Commerce, over two years ago established a Metrication Subcommittee to prepare for coordination of Federal agency metric standards conversion programs. The subcommittee soon recognized that standards conversion was only part of each agency's prospective metric conversion activities. Even so, the Department of Commerce extended invitations to all agencies interested in those activities to designate "Metric Coordinators" to prepare their agencies for metric conversion. To date, 43 agencies have appointed such coordinators who have been working with the ICSP Metrication Subcommittee. (Enclosure 1 is a list of these "Metric Coordinators.") However, few of them are believed to have broad policy-making responsibility, particularly in the field of metrication generally.

It became apparent to the ICSP's Metrication Subcommittee and the Metric Coordinators that they could not effectively make the high-level policy decisions required to effectuate the overall, broad metric conversion programs contemplated by the Metric Conversion Act. Accordingly, they requested the ICSP to recommend establishment of an independent, high-level Interagency Committee on Metric Policy. At its plenary meeting on September 15, 1976, the ICSP voted unanimously to recommend the establishment of such a new Committee, with the further suggestion that the ICSP would be available for consultation on standards matters by that Committee, if established.

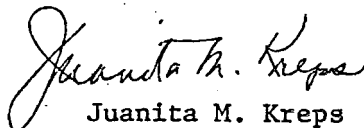
I concur with the ICSP recommendation to establish a high-level Interagency Committee on Metric Policy. Enclosure 2 to this letter is a draft charter for such a Committee. As this draft charter indicates, the primary functions of the Committee are to: collect and analyze data; provide Executive Branch liaison with the U.S. Metric Board; prepare, as appropriate, recommendations regarding coordination of Federal agency metric conversion plans and policies including interaction with private sector, State and local government metric interests; seek to strengthen Federal agency metric coordination; and, with the agreement of the agencies concerned, attempt to resolve differences among Federal agencies in implementing metric conversion programs.

The draft charter provides that the grade level of agency representatives on the Committee would be "Level IV" or higher, with alternates accepted at GS-17 or higher. Such high-level representation is desirable because of the need to discuss and make broad policy recommendations affecting agency-wide activities, and to facilitate appropriate interaction with the U.S. Metric Board. (The Board's Executive Director may hold a rank up to "Level III.") The Committee would be responsible to me and would be chaired by my Assistant Secretary for Science and Technology, Dr. Jordan J. Baruch.

Accordingly, I request your views regarding the establishment of an Interagency Committee on Metric Policy by the Department of Commerce. Also, any comments you would like to make on the provisions of the enclosed draft charter would be welcomed. I would appreciate receiving such views and comments by August 30, 1977, if possible.

If agency responses support creation of this Committee, I shall establish the Committee for an initial two-year period, and shall transmit to the Heads of agencies which indicate an interest in becoming members of the Committee a copy of the final charter together with a request that such agencies designate a representative (and alternate, if desired) to the Committee.

Sincerely,


Juanita M. Kreps

2 Enclosures

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-2-

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Attachment 2

Approved For Release 2004/07/08 : CIA-RDP80M00165A001700120018-5

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

Charter of
The Interagency Committee on Metric Policy

Establishment

1. The Interagency Committee on Metric Policy (hereinafter the "Committee") is hereby established to advise the Secretary of Commerce and the Heads of other Federal agencies.
2. The Committee will be responsible and report to the Secretary of Commerce.

Purpose and Scope

The purpose of the Committee is to coordinate and provide policy guidance regarding U.S. Government efforts to implement metric conversion, and to serve as liaison with the United States Metric Board (which is to be established pursuant to the Metric Conversion Act of 1975). The objective of the Committee shall be to promote effective and consistent policies in metric conversion activities throughout the public and private sectors. The scope of the Committee's activities shall include, but not be limited to, standards, training, education and public information, weights and measures, consumer affairs, procurement, data collection, and Federal administrative procedures, as these relate to U.S. Government metric conversion activities.

Functions

The Committee, with respect to the internal operations of the Federal Government and in order to facilitate U.S. Government conversion to metric, shall:

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1. Collect and analyze data as appropriate;
2. Provide Executive Branch liaison with the United States Metric Board, established by Section 5 of the Metric Conversion Act of 1975 (P.L. 94-168);
3. Prepare, as appropriate, recommended metric conversion plans and policies for the Federal Government in those areas where more than one Federal agency has a primary interest, such as transportation, consumer affairs, construction, procurement, weights and measures, and data collection;
4. Prepare, as appropriate, recommendations concerning the development of uniform Federal Government metrication policies, plans, and actions for interaction by Federal agencies with private sector, State, and local government interests engaged in metric activities;
5. Seek to identify needs and actions to strengthen coordination among Federal agencies in their metric conversion activities;
6. With the agreement of the agencies concerned, endeavor to resolve differences among Federal agencies serving on the Committee regarding their implementation of metrication when in the opinion of the Committee such differences are likely to inhibit efficient Federal Government or private sector conversion to metric; and

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7. Take steps to eliminate unnecessary duplication of Federal metric activities which may be performed outside the Federal Government.

Membership

1. The initial members of the Committee shall be:

Central Intelligence Agency
Civil Aeronautics Board
Commission of Fine Arts
Commodity Futures Trading Commission
Community Services Administration
Consumer Product Safety Commission
Department of Agriculture
Department of Commerce
Department of Defense
Department of Health, Education, and Welfare
Department of Housing and Urban Development
Department of Interior
Department of Justice
Department of Labor
Department of State
Department of Transportation
Department of the Treasury
Energy Research and Development Administration
Environmental Protection Agency
Export-Import Bank of the U.S.

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Farm Credit Administration
Federal Communications Commission
Federal Energy Administration
Federal Maritime Commission
Federal Power Commission
Federal Reserve System
Federal Trade Commission
General Services Administration
Government Printing Office
International Trade Commission
Interstate Commerce Commission
Library of Congress
National Aeronautics and Space Administration
National Labor Relations Board
Nuclear Regulatory Commission
Office of Technology Assessment
Postal Service
Securities and Exchange Commission
Small Business Administration
Smithsonian Institution
Tennessee Valley Authority
U.S. Information Agency
Veterans Administration

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2. Other Federal agencies may become members of the Committee upon application to or by invitation from the Secretary of Commerce.
3. The Head of each Federal agency serving on the Committee shall appoint a responsible official whose rank shall be not less than a "Level IV" of the Executive Schedule (5 U.S.C. 5312-15, 5317) to serve as that Federal agency's metric policy official and representative on the Committee. Alternates, whose rank shall be not less than GS-17, may also be appointed. Exception to these grade level provisions may be authorized by the Secretary of Commerce upon request from the Head of the agency concerned. The Head of each Federal agency serving on the Committee shall inform the Secretary of Commerce of his appointed representative, and alternate if any. Appointments to the Committee shall be for an indefinite term.

Administrative Provisions

1. The Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Science and Technology shall be the Committee Chairman. The Deputy Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Product Standards shall serve as the alternate to the Committee Chairman and, where requested by the Chairman, will carry out specific responsibilities of the Chairman as assigned.
2. Meetings of the Committee shall be conducted only when a quorum is present at the commencement thereof. One-third of the membership of the Committee shall constitute a quorum.

3. The Committee may establish an Executive Committee, subcommittees, and working groups as deemed appropriate. A Committee representative may bring experts from his Federal agency to Committee meetings to participate in discussions of particular items on the agenda. Upon receiving prior approval of the Chairman, Committee representatives may invite individuals who are not employees of their Federal agencies, including nongovernment consultants or observers, to participate in such discussions on an ad hoc basis.
4. The Committee may draft other administrative or operating procedures as necessary, consistent with its purpose and functions.
5. The Department of Commerce shall provide support services for the Committee, including the Executive Secretariat.
6. As may be necessary for carrying out the functions of this Committee, member agencies shall cooperate fully in endeavoring to furnish appropriate assistance to the Committee.

Annual Report

The Committee shall submit a progress report to the Secretary of Commerce at 12-month intervals after its establishment. This report should summarize the Committee's activities during the previous 12-month period and include a description of all recommendations formulated by the Committee and actions taken in response to such recommendations during the period covered.

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Duration

The Committee shall terminate two years from the date of this charter unless the Secretary of Commerce determines that continuation of the Committee is necessary.

Signed _____

Secretary of Commerce

Date:

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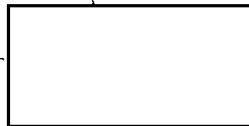
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Remarks:			
<p>The Director:</p> <p style="margin-left: 40px;">The Agency has been well out in front of most Government organizations in metrication activity. We have been able to achieve this position with most of the officers involved at the GS-15/GS-16 level. We believe the Agency should escalate the level of its representation only if necessary to achieve US Government policy.</p>			
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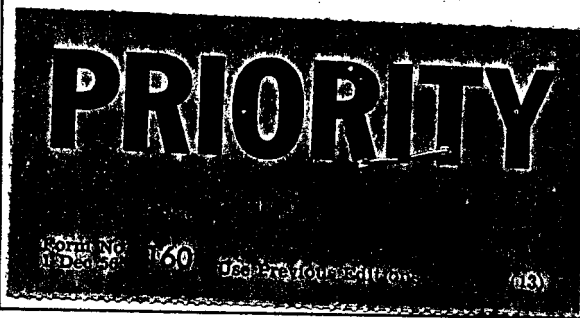
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MEMORANDUM FOR: [redacted] *DATE D*
SUBJECT: *for action*

Leo,

Per our conversation, here is the package from Mrs. Kreps regarding metric conversion. Since she wants an answer by 30 August, the Executive Secretary wants to send something to the Director by COB 23 August.



Special Assistant/DDI



17 Aug 77

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EXECUTIVE SECRETARIAT

Routing Slip

DDI

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Remarks:

All prepared DDI responses.

[Signature Box]

Executive Secretary

16 Aug

Date

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