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ADS Chapter 323

Metric Specifications

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**Functional Series 300 – Acquisition and Assistance
ADS Chapter 323 – Metric Specifications**

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*An asterisk indicates that the adjacent material is new or substantively revised.

ADS Chapter 323 – Metric Specifications

323.1 OVERVIEW

Effective Date: 07/16/2003

This chapter describes the policy directives and required procedures for furthering USAID's metric system policy. The objective of USAID's metric system policy is to enhance the competitiveness of U.S. industry by promoting the adoption of standards that facilitate the export of its products to international markets, where the metric system is virtually the universal standard.

323.2 PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITIES

Effective Date: 10/18/2006

- a. **All personnel generating specifications, quantitative data, or requirements for them** are responsible for employing or requiring the use of the metric system of measurement, to the maximum extent practical.
- b. The **Metric Executive** has the primary responsibility for the management of USAID's metric transition program, as specified in [E.O. 12770](#). The designated Metric Executive is the individual who is assigned to the position of **Deputy Director for Policy, Evaluation, Transportation, Cost Audit, and Support in the Office of Acquisition and Assistance (M/OAA)**. In the absence of this individual, this role is assumed by the individual who is assigned to the position of **Deputy Director for Operations** in M/OAA. In the absence of both of the above, this role is assumed by the individual who is acting for the Deputy Director for Operations in M/OAA.
- c. The **USAID Metric Executive, the Contracting/Grant Officer, and the USAID official who approves the procurement/assistance requirement** (by signing an Acquisition and Assistance Request Document (AARD) or equivalent document) are authorized to waive the requirement for use of metric system units in quantitative data. (see **323.3.3**).
- d. When waivers to the requirement to use the metric system are based upon an adverse impact to U.S. firms, the **Office of Small and Disadvantaged Business Utilization (OSDBU)** must provide its clearance before they may be approved.

323.3 POLICY DIRECTIVES AND REQUIRED PROCEDURES

Effective Date: 07/16/2003

323.3.1 Requirement to Use the Metric System

Effective Date: 07/16/2003

The metric system of measurement must be used for specifications and quantitative data that are incorporated in or required by USAID-financed procurements, grants, and other business-related activities.

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323.3.1.1 Limitation on Use of the 100-Millimeter Building Module Standard

Effective Date: 07/16/2003

Unless the criteria below are met, the 100-millimeter building module standard must not be utilized.

Before the specification of modular construction products for USAID-funded projects in terms of the 100-millimeter building module standard, the personnel responsible for product specifications must conduct market research to determine the commercial availability of such products. These products must be specified in multiples of 100-millimeters, according to this metric building standard, only when:

- a. The product's application requires it to coordinate dimensionally into the 100-millimeter module;
- b. Market research demonstrates the modular product's commercial availability; and
- c. The product's total installed cost is reasonable.

323.3.2 Transitional Use of Dual Units

Effective Date: 07/16/2003

When the metric system is not the predominant measurement system for a particular application, specifications and quantitative data may be expressed in both the metric and the traditional equivalent units as long as the metric units are listed first. As the use of metric units approaches general acceptance for the application, the use of the traditional units must be discontinued.

323.3.3 Waivers

Effective Date: 07/16/2003

The requirement to use the metric system of measurement may be waived when the USAID Metric Executive, the Contracting/Grant Officer, or the USAID official who approves the procurement/assistance requirement (by signing an Acquisition and Assistance Request Document (AARD) or equivalent document) determines, in writing, that such usage is impractical or it is likely to cause U.S. firms to experience significant inefficiencies or the loss of markets.

The following procedures must be followed when granting a waiver to the requirement to use the metric system:

- a. When a waiver of the requirement for using metric system units in specifications or quantitative data is based upon the adverse impact on U.S. firms, clearance from the USAID Metric Executive and the Office of Small and Disadvantaged Business Utilization (OSDBU) must be obtained before authorization.

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- b. A blanket waiver for a class of multiple transactions must not be issued for a term of more than three years.
- c. The basis for each waiver and any plans to adapt similar requirements to metric specifications in future procurements/grants must be documented in the procurement, grant, results framework, or Commodity Import Program (CIP) file.
- d. The USAID Metric Executive is authorized to overrule a decision to grant a waiver or to nullify a blanket waiver made by other officials as long as a contractor/grantee's rights under an executed contract/grant are not infringed upon.
- e. An individual designated by the head of each procuring activity must maintain a log of the waivers from the metric requirements that are authorized for contracts, grants, and purchase orders. The logs must list the commodity/service being procured, total dollar value of the procured item(s), waiver date, authorizing official, basis for waiver, and USAID actions that can promote metrication and lessen the need for future waivers. Mission program and commodity offices must maintain logs for commodities/services financed by host country contracts and CIPs.
- f. Within 30 days of the closing of each fiscal year, a designated individual from each USAID/W procuring activity and Mission must submit a copy of the metric waiver log for the year to the USAID Metric Executive. (Mission logs are to be consolidated in a Mission report.) Repetitive purchases of commercially produced and marketed items and classes of items may be consolidated in reporting procurements that do not exceed \$10,000 cumulatively during the reporting period.

323.4 MANDATORY REFERENCES

Effective Date: 12/28/2011

323.4.1 External Mandatory References

Effective Date: 12/28/2011

- a. [Federal Standard 376B, Preferred Metric Units for General Use by the Federal Government, January 27, 1993](#)
- b. [Metric Conversion Act of 1975, as amended by the Omnibus Trade and Competitiveness Act of 1988, section 5164. \(15 U.S.C. 205\)](#)
- c. [Executive Order No. 12770 dated July 25, 1991](#)
- d. [Federal Agency Guidance for the Acquisition of Modular Metric Construction Products; Federal Register, May 16, 1996, 61 FR 24761](#)

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323.4.2 Internal Mandatory References

Effective Date: 07/16/2003

323.4.3 Mandatory Forms

Effective Date: 07/16/2003

323.5 ADDITIONAL HELP

Effective Date: 05/21/2009

National Institute of Standards and Technology, Metric Program Home Page
(<http://www.nist.gov/pml/wmd/metric/metric-program.cfm>)

323.5.1 Optional Forms

Effective Date: 07/16/2003

323.6 DEFINITIONS

Effective Date: 07/16/2003

The terms and definitions listed below have been incorporated into the ADS Glossary. See the [ADS Glossary](#) for all ADS terms and definitions.

Alternate Metric Executive

USAID's Alternate Metric Executive is the individual designated to perform the activities and assume the responsibilities of USAID's Metric Executive in his/her absence. The individual designated for this role is identified in Section 323.2. (**Chapter 323**)

business-related activities

The use of measurement units in agency programs and functions related to trade, industry, and commerce. (**Chapter 323**)

Metric Executive

USAID's Metric Executive is the individual designated to assume the responsibilities and perform the activities prescribed for this role in E. O. 12770 and in ADS 323. In his/her absence, the designated Alternate Metric Executive assumes this role. The individuals designated for these roles are identified in Section 323.2. (**Chapter 323**)

metric system

The International System of Units (SI), as interpreted or modified for use in the United States by the Secretary of Commerce. It is currently issued by the General Services Administration as Federal Standard 376B, dated January 27, 1993. (**Chapter 323**)

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