



USAID
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

Mrs. Elizabeth J. Gentry
National Institute of Standards and Technology
Laws & Metrics Group
Weights and Measures Division
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Dear Mrs. Gentry:

Metric System Report for the United States Agency for International
Development for FY 2006

The U.S. Agency for International Development plays a leading role in the administration of foreign assistance. As the principal foreign aid agency of the U.S. Government, one of the primary functions of the agency is to manage delivery of bilateral assistance. In FY 2006, approximately 4.22 billion dollars was spent on agency administered programs. To support these programs, the agency relies heavily on shipments of commodities to countries in the developing world. For us to fulfill this requirement, the agency will have to arrange shipment of a vast array of different kinds of commodities. One of the most important requirements for administration of foreign assistance is the need to oversee conveyance of emergency food supplies and other relief related commodities.

Most of the countries that receive commodity assistance use the metric system as their preferred system for weights and measures. To be able to support these programs in an efficient and cost-effective manner, it is essential that we comply fully with the requirements of the Metric Conversion Act.

The requirements for mandatory use are contained in Chapter 323, "Metric Specifications" of the agency's Automated Directives System (ADS), which requires use of the metric system in USAID's procurement, grants and business related activities. A revised version of Chapter 323 was issued by the agency's Office of Acquisition and Assistance on October 18, 2006 to inform USAID personnel that European Union metric only requirements will become effective in 2010.

Although we feel that the agency has already made a successful metric conversion, we will continue to monitor the mandatory requirement and have met with industry regarding their concerns. The Evaluation Division in the Office of Acquisition and Assistance has included a review of the agency's adherence to the metric requirements to its analysis of procurement activities.

In addition to the regulations that have been established to monitor compliance of for-profit organizations, the Contract Audit and Support Division at OAA is also required to review use of the metric system by nonprofit organizations. A review of the use of the metric system by nonprofit organizations is included in the audits required by OMB Circular A-133, "Audits of States, Local Governments, and Non-Profit Organizations".

Waivers

Chapter 323 of the agency's Automated Directive System permits waivers when it is believed that use of metric system is impractical or will have an adverse impact on U.S. firms and nonprofit organizations. According to the agency's waiver guidelines, exceptions to the mandatory requirements are subject to the approval of the agency's Metric Executive.

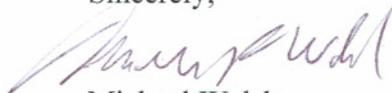
The following is a list of significant events that occurred during this reporting period:

1. A revision of the Agency's ADS Chapter 323 "Metric Specifications" was issued on October 18, 2006.
2. The agency's Metric Executive did not issue any waivers during this reporting period.
3. No U.S. firms registered an adverse impact from USAID's, metric policy with its Office of Small and Disadvantaged Business.
4. Met with representatives of manufacturers of Non-Ferrous Metal and Building Materials and the Department of Commerce's Industry Trade Advisory Committee (ITAC9) about the use of metrics on USAID construction projects.

Agency's Point of Contact:

Point of Contact at USAID is the Metric Executive. In the USAID Office of Acquisition and Assistance, the position of the Metric Executive is held by the Deputy Director of the Policy, Evaluation, Transportation, Cost Audit and Support Divisions. The Metric Executive for USAID is Lynn Kopala. Ms Kopala's phone number at OAA is (202) 712-4759. lkopala@usaid.gov.

Sincerely,



Michael Walsh
Director
Bureau for Management
Office of Acquisition and Assistance