

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

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ADS Chapter 323 – Metric Specifications

323.1 OVERVIEW

The objective of USAID's metric 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

- a. If you generate specifications or quantitative data, or the requirements for these specifications or data, you 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 EO 12770. The designated Metric Executive is the Deputy Director for Policy, Evaluation, Support and Transportation in the Office of Procurement (M/OP). In the absence of this person, the Deputy Director for Operations in M/OP assumes this role. In the absence of both of the above, the acting Deputy Director for Operations in M/OP assumes the role.
- 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) have the authority to waive the requirement for use of metric system units in quantitative data. (See [323.3.3](#))

323.3 POLICY DIRECTIVES AND REQUIRED PROCEDURES

323.3.1 Requirement to Use the Metric System

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.

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

Unless the criteria below are met, do not use the 100-millimeter building module standard. (See Mandatory Reference, [Federal Agency Guidance for the Acquisition of Modular Metric Construction Products; Federal Register, May 16, 1996, 61 FR 24761](#))

For USAID-funded projects, those responsible for product specifications must conduct market research to determine the commercial availability of modular construction products before specifying these products in terms of the 100-millimeter building module

standard. Specify these products in multiples of 100-millimeters according to this metric building standard only when

- a. The product's application will require it to fit together with other modular metric components utilizing 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

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

323.3.3 Waivers

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) determines in writing that such usage is impractical or is likely to cause U.S. firms to experience significant inefficiencies or loss of markets.

You must adhere to the following procedures when waiving the requirement to use the metric system:

- a. When a waiver of the requirement to use metric system units in specifications or quantitative data is based upon the adverse impact on U.S. firms, you must obtain clearance from the USAID Metric Executive and the Office of Small and Disadvantaged Business Utilization (OSDBU) before authorization.
- b. Do not issue a blanket waiver for a class of multiple transactions for a term of more than three years.
- c. Document the basis for each waiver and any plans to adapt similar requirements to metric specifications in future procurements/grants in the procurement, grant, results framework, or Commodity Import Program (CIP) file.
- d. The USAID Metric Executive has the authority to overrule a grant of waiver or to nullify a blanket waiver made by other officials so long as this does not infringe upon a contractor/grantee's rights under an executed contract/grant.

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 potential USAID actions that would 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. (Consolidate Mission logs into a Mission report.) You may consolidate repetitive purchases of commercially produced and marketed items and classes of items in reporting procurements that do not exceed \$10,000 cumulatively during the reporting period.

323.4 MANDATORY REFERENCES

323.4.1 External Mandatory References

- a. [Federal Standard 376B, Preferred Metric Units for General Use by the Federal Government, Jan 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](#)

323.4.2 Internal Mandatory References

323.5 ADDITIONAL HELP

- a. **National Institute of Standards and Technology, Metric Program Home Page, http://ts.nist.gov/ts/htdocs/200/202/mpo_home.htm**

[*The following two documents are no longer applicable and have been removed from the Additional Help section:

Designation of Agency Metric Executive and Designation of Alternate Agency Metric Executive]

323.6 DEFINITIONS

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 performs the activities and the responsibilities of USAID's Metric Executive in that person's absence. Section 323.2 of ADS 323 identifies the individual designated for this role. (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 assumes the responsibilities and performs the activities prescribed for this role in EO 12770 and in this chapter. The designated Alternate Metric Executive assumes this role in the absence of the Metric Executive. Section 323.2 of ADS 323 identifies the individuals designated for these roles. (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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