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JUNE 17 1967

ORGANISERS

Faculty of Architecture, Design & Development  
Faculty of Engineering  
Institute of Adult Studies

P A P E R S

1. P.E.Phillips, Superintendent of Weights and Measures, Kenya
2. Change-over to Metric System -  
Notice from Ministry of Commerce and Industry
3. S. I. Units
4. Selby Mvusi - 'Standardisation'
5. Questionnaire from British Standards Institution
6. J.R.F.Brooke 'The Building Profession and Industry'
7. Van Essche and H. Mammen - 'Modular Co-ordination'
8. F. T. Henson, Timsales - Timber Industry
9. Kenya Forest Department - Forestry
10. P.A.Campbell - Structural Engineering
11. E.A.R. & H. - Reply to Metric Questionnaire
12. Metal Box Co. of East Africa
13. Printing & Packaging Corporation Ltd.
14. Kenya Shell Ltd.
15. E.A. Post & Telecommunications Administration
16. E.A. Industrial Research Organisation
17. Prof. W.B.Palmer - Education of Mechanical Engineers
18. R.C.Vold - Choice of Metric Units
19. Housewives Consumer Organisation
20. Kenya Polytechnic
21. City Education Officer
22. K.C.Usher, Headmaster, Kilimani School
23. Curriculum Development & Research Centre-  
Ministry of Education

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METRIC SYMPOSIUM - JUNE 17th 1967

PAPER BY P.E. PHILLIPS

SUPERINTENDENT OF WEIGHTS AND MEASURES, KENYA GOVERNMENT.

- a) The changes involved are of two distinct types, those which are compulsory by law and those which are voluntary to a certain extent but are because of the Government's decision to change to the metric system. The first category include all trade transactions, both retail and wholesale, import and export, customs declarations, carriage of goods by weight and measure and it is these that the Government will require to change according to a phased programme over the next four years. The actual changing of weighing and measuring equipment used in such transactions will commence in Nairobi in March 1968 followed by Dar-es-Salaam, Kampala and over the following three years spreading to smaller trading centres. It is anticipated that, for example, customs declarations during 1968 may be made in both metric and imperial units but from the 1st of January, 1969, only metric units will be used. Many large trading organisations are already well advanced in their planning for the metric change-over.
- b) It is anticipated that international standards will be accepted and embodied into the laws of the East African countries. Specifications for weights and measures used in trade transactions, will follow the normal specifications of those used in other countries which have been using the metric system for a number of years. Contact has already been made with international organisations who are responsible in these fields. The Weights and Measures Department will need standards of weight and measures of length and expects to obtain these during 1967, so that they will be prepared to verify and stamp traders equipment in the new system during 1968. The Weights and Measures Departments would welcome information on any problems which may arise in commerce and industry from the decision to change to metric. This information should be consolidated and be in the hands of the Superintendents of Weights and Measures before the end of 1967.
- c) All trading organisations will depend on the changes being introduced through the legislation by the Ministries responsible for weights and measures.
- d) The present legislation will have to be replaced by new legislation to introduce the metric system as the only system of weights and measures permitted for trade transactions within the country. The legislation in Kenya introduced international definitions of the metre and kilogramme in 1962, so in Kenya changes



will not be so profound. It is anticipated that certain transitional legislation will be necessary to ensure a smooth change-over to the metric system. Such legislation would enable the responsible Minister to gazette areas and times for the effecting of the change of traders equipment, and after the expiry of the relevant time needed, to make illegal the use of any other system than the metric system for trade purposes in that specified area.

e) It is most necessary that a central co-ordinating body be formed to deal with the change-over to the metric system in the fields of engineering, building construction and manufacture. It is essential that professional organisations of engineers, architects, surveyors should form continual study groups so that proper phasing in these fields takes place. It is desirable that general agreement should be reached to introduce metric units at the design and planning stage first. This will be followed by the introduction of metric units into specifications for all new projects both in construction and in engineering. The next stage is for suppliers of necessary goods and equipment to effect the project, to order such necessary items in metric units, and the final stage is for actual construction to be in metric units. It is true to say that metric thinking must first be expected at the drawing board stage. In most industrial and constructional fields this should be done as soon as is practicable and possible. It is desirable that the Government should be informed of any such study groups so that the two ways of exchange of information could be arranged and good liaison maintained.

Aff. of Mr. Campbell.

