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Government on side, EC response awaited

The Government has announced that it intends to support supplementary indications for an "indefinite period". In a letter dated 10 January 2007, it said: "The use of supplementary indications on goods is an important means of facilitating trade between Member States and non-metric countries (such as the USA). The Government believes that the removal of the permission to use supplementary indications after 2009 could create a barrier to trade and increase costs for UK businesses wishing to export to the US. Therefore, the Government intends to support the continued use of supplementary indications after 2009 for an indefinite period".

Regarding the pint for draught beer, cider, and milk in returnable containers, and the mile for road traffic signs, the Government said: "...the derogations do not adversely affect trade between Member States and [it] intends to propose to the Commission that, in line with the principle of subsidiarity, the future of these derogations should be a matter to be decided by the individual Member States which make use of them".

BWMA's own response to the EC consultation is on page two of this *Yardstick*; it supplements our main submission which was reproduced in *Yardstick* 28. In addition to calling for a repeal of the ban on supplementary indications, we are also aiming for the restoration of the legality of pounds and ounces. We expect the Commission's response in time for the AGM and Conference.

John Gardner, Director

Annual General Meeting & Conference

Saturday 19th May 2007

Victory Services Club, 63 Seymour Street, London W2 2HF

DETAILS ON BACK PAGE

BWMA is a non-profit body that exists to promote parity in law between British and metric units. It enjoys support from across Britain's political spectrum, from all manner of businesses and the general public. BWMA is financed by member subscriptions and donations.

Membership is £12 per year. Cheques or postal orders payable to "BWMA", 41 Greensleeves Avenue, Broadstone, Dorset BH18 8BJ

BWMA response to EC consultation on Directive 80/181 and supplementary indications

26 February 2007

The British Weights and Measures Association is pleased to respond to the Commission Services public consultation on Council Directive 80/181/EEC. This response complements our submission of 24 August 2006.

The main question for this Association is question 7:

“Should the use of supplementary indications in Article 3 in Directive 80/181/EEC be able to continue?”

Our answer is yes; for the practical reasons identified by the Commission on page 7 of the consultation paper, and because EU companies should be free to provide additional information alongside any statutory minimum. Further, we point out that in our correspondence between 2004 and 2006, the Commission was unable to provide any text from the Directive that states supplementary indications are illegal; illegality is merely assumed by the Commission in the absence of authorisation. We refer again to the matter of supplementary indications in our response to Question 6, below.

Our responses to the other questions are as follows:

Question 1: Should the ‘katal’ be introduced to Directive 80/181/EEC?

We have no objection to the ‘katal’ being added.

Question 2: Should the use of SI-indications in specific uses be left to other directives other than Directive 80/181/EEC?

This is outside our Association’s remit. However, our general experience is that specific uses should be left to specific legislation, since one unit may have more than one use.

Questions 3 Should arbitrary units be included in Directive 80/181/EEC if supplementary indications are no longer allowed?

Please see our response to question 6, next page.

Question 4 Should ratios be included in Directive 80/181/EEC if supplementary indications are no longer allowed?

Please see our response to question 6.

Question 5 Should the exemption in Article 2b be maintained in Directive 80/181/EEC?

Our understanding is that, if exemption Article 2b is not maintained, international transport will not be allowed to use units such as the nautical mile for shipping, and the foot for aircraft altitude. Although views on this matter are best made by the industries concerned, we offer the following comment:

The nautical mile and knot are based upon the circumference of the earth as represented by 360 degrees, an arrangement which accords with our system of time. So long as 360 degrees remains the internationally accepted division of a circle, we do not believe that the removal of its related units is realistic or purposeful. Furthermore, international agreements would be disrupted, and conversion costs borne with no tangible benefit. We are also concerned that changing aircraft altimeters from feet to metres could compromise air safety.

Questions 3 Should arbitrary units be included in Directive 80/181/EEC if supplementary indications are no longer allowed?

Question 4 Should ratios be included in Directive 80/181/EEC if supplementary indications are no longer allowed?

Question 6 Should indications specific to certain sectors be included in Directive 80/181/EEC

We answer the above three questions together.

The use of measurement is not static and unchanging; products develop and change, and industry must be able to respond accordingly. The consultation document refers to some of the many and diverse units used by industry such as the washing machine ‘scoop’ and inches for computer screens; others include:

- Egg sizes (‘medium’ is an industry equivalent to 53-63g)
- The Bradford count and hank to measure wool quality
- Shoe and dress sizes
- King and queen size beds
- Feet to describe the height of Christmas trees
- The punnett for foods

Some of these sizing scales are irregular, as for eggs, and others are along binary lines (1, 2, 4, 8, etc). This

is why many products are described as ‘size 1’ and ‘2’, or ‘small’ and ‘large’, since metric does not comfortably reflect the sizing scales associated with these types of product. Paper illustrates the point; sizes start with 841mm × 1189mm (1 square metre). This halves to the next size, 594 mm × 841 mm, which is halved again to 420 mm × 594 mm, and so on. It is not realistic to expect consumers to remember metric dimensions, so the industry adopts its own sizing scale: A0, A1, A2, A3, A4, etc. The benefit of allowing supplementary indications in perpetuity is that industry is free to adopt expressions of quantity, dimension, ratio, etc that are appropriate to their own special manufacturing or retailing circumstances, which SI cannot accommodate.

If the Commission agrees with the above reasoning, questions 3 and 4 no longer apply. The issue that then arises with Question 6 is whether industry units should be included within the scope of the Directive in their own right. BWMA’s view is that legislation should reflect the needs of business as well as regulate them; therefore, we agree that industry units should be included within the Directive. But this should not prejudice the need for supplementary expression.

We answer the next three questions together.

Question 8 Do market operators face any problems with the current system?

Question 9 [Have] all issues and alternatives concerning Directive 80/181/EEC been highlighted in the above text?

Question 10 Indicate any costs and benefits [expected] as a result of any of the alternatives

BWMA’s response to this consultation is concerned primarily with supplementary indications, but we note the openness of Questions 8, 9 and 10 and consequently raise the matter of UK imperial units used for use in the United Kingdom.

The scope of the Directive is indicated by the extract quoted on page 8 of the consultation paper:

“Whereas the laws which regulate the use of units of measurement in the Member States differ from one Member State to another and as a result hinder trade; whereas, in these circumstances, it is necessary to harmonize laws, regulations and administrative provisions in order to overcome such obstacles”.

The above emphasis shows that the Directive is intended to promote the working of the Single Market, that is, trade between EU Member States. It does not, by definition, relate to markets that operate *within* individual Member States, such as the sale of fruit and vegetables in a local market.

Yet, the derogation under Article 1 (d) for pounds and ounces, used for selling goods “loose from bulk” (typically fresh food) expired in January 2000. This represents an incorrect implementation of the Directive, and one which prevents the flexibility needed for local or domestic markets. Accordingly, we ask that the derogation be restored for an indefinite period. Whether the derogation is taken advantage of is a matter that can be decided within the interested Member States.

BWMA conclusion

In summary, we urge the Commission:

- i) To accept and support supplementary indications as a permanent option
- ii) To restore the legality of pounds and ounces as authorised units within the United Kingdom for foods and goods sold loose from bulk

* * *

MEP’s Question to the European Commission

In February, Christopher Heaton-Harris, Member of the European Parliament (Conservative), put the following question to the EC: “Can the Commission explain why the exemption for pounds and ounces used for goods sold loose from bulk (e.g. fruit and vegetables) was removed in January 2000, when this is a domestic retail matter for the United Kingdom, and is not a matter of trade between EU Member States? Equally, why has the Directive’s ban on pounds and ounces not been included the EC’s consultation, despite the fact it has been the source of much heated debate in the United Kingdom?”

The Commission replied: “It should be noted that when the Council adopted Directive 89/617/EEC, with its requirement that goods sold loose and from bulk should be measured in metric units from 2000 onwards, this was done with full agreement of the United Kingdom. However, the Commission agrees with the Honourable Member that this issue has been the source of much heated debate in the United Kingdom. The Commission Staff Working Document on units of measurement of 22 December 2006 which formed the subject of a public consultation and to which the Honourable Member refers does not explicitly mention or exclude goods sold loose in bulk. Instead, stakeholders have been invited to present all issues they feel merit discussion in the public consultation. The Commission is currently analysing the results of the submissions received”.

BWMA's global press release

February 2007: BWMA's press officer David Delaney issued the following press release across the European Union, translated for each country. Similar press releases, also translated, were issued the next day across North America, Australasia and Asia, including China, Japan and the Pacific Rim.

European Business Must Act Now to Save Measurement Flexibility, warns BWMA

European businesses need to know that the display of US and industry-specific measurements alongside metric could be illegal in the European Union in less than three year's time.

BWMA (British Weights and Measures Association) is concerned that many EU businesses are not aware of this deadline, or of a current consultation by the European Commission that closes in three week's time asking for business views on the issue.

At the moment, businesses have the option of showing US and other measurements alongside metric for all economic purposes (such as on product packaging, websites, catalogues, etc). Under EC Directive 80/181, extra measurement information will be illegal for use within the EU from 1 January 2010.

If the ban on US and industry-specific measurements alongside metric goes ahead, EU industry will be forced to duplicate manufacturing processes when selling goods both in Europe and internationally, since EU industry will no longer be able to use one process in both metric and US measurements.

According to BWMA Director John Gardner, "A ban on US and British units does not only affect UK and US business - European businesses are equally affected since they rely on these measurements in the international marketplace, particularly the USA, and for traditional industries".

The ban will apply to all products, packaging, advertisements, instructions, brochures, magazines, books, e-commerce, internet sites, internal business processes, catalogues, etc. No EU industry is exempt from the ban.

Here is the second paragraph as it appears in the Chinese version:

BWMA (英国度量衡协会) 担心很多国际企业不了解这一情况, 或不清楚目前欧洲委员会为针求企业对这一问题的看法而进行的将再历时3周的咨询

The Shooting Sports Trust and Gun Trade Association, submission to EC, February 2007 (extract):

"Shotguns are classified by a bore or gauge and not by a recognisable measurement, either metric or imperial. The system derives from a time when standard measurements did not exist. Artillery was measured by the weight of the lead ball that it discharged e.g. a seven pounder. Small arms were measured by the number of lead balls of the size of the bore that would make up one pound of lead. Thus, a gun which fired balls that were twelve to the pound was a 12 bore. The system is of great antiquity and pre-dates any form of metrication. It was standard in England long before the 17th century ... In the UK, the bore sizes were given imperial sizes and the European proof house applied metric dimensions, but these were within relatively wide parameters ... There is no single metric dimension that represents the bore or gauge of a smooth bore gun. The bore system is standardised throughout the world and is fully understood by manufacturers and users ... The existing system is not merely standard in EU countries, but is world standard, and any change would divorce the EU from a world standard. To impose a requirement for only a single metric measurement for marking shotguns made in the EU, and for the packaging for such shotguns from some date in the future, would leave the millions of existing shotguns with the marks now in use and would cause confusion to users and seriously inhibit trade in those guns with the greater part of the world ...

The existing system for weighing bullets and powders has been in use for more than a hundred years or so and is well established. There is no reason to change it and every reason, including that of public safety, for maintaining the present system. Handloading has been shown to be a perfectly safe activity and billions of rounds of ammunition have been loaded and used over the years with little or no hazard. It would be quite wrong to increase the prospect of an accident".

Production Pattern (Bristol) Ltd, 28 Jan 2007:

"We supply tools, assembly jigs and moulds to the aircraft industry. It is common practice to use Imperial measures when supplying certain customers especially when older aircraft and American aircraft are concerned. Evidently this will become a criminal offence in future. It is vital that the EU does not introduce such a draconian restriction on trade in an environment that professes to be a free trade common market. No useful purpose is served from such restrictive "non-tariff barriers" to trade, both internal and external. There is international commonality in the definition of imperial units that are common currency within and between Britain and its trading partners. So, the question of any hindrance to trade does not arise. The hindrance arises from the forthcoming prohibition".

Too Much Information is an article by Malcolm Ball, Acting-Chairman of the Association of Suppliers to Clothing Industry, published in the Dec 2006-Jan 2007 edition of Fashion Business International. The following is an extract:

[EC Directive 80/181] is a concern for many industries - not just textiles and apparel - as a large proportion of consumers, mainly in the UK, still use Imperial units (inches, ounces) on a daily basis. They were educated in Imperial units and these form their mental frames of reference ... The implications do not impact only on clothing but also components and trims, which would also have to be Eurocentrically labelled, rather than internationally labelled.

This particular type of legislation - which is always diligently, if not enthusiastically, applied in the UK - also has a worrying change of emphasis, which does need to be challenged. Normal legislation requires that there must be at least a legal minimum quantity of information provided for the customer. This covers content, size, safety, etc, so that the consumer more fully understands the product being purchased. There has never been a restriction on *additional factual* information being provided to further assist the consumer. This directive changes all that. In effect, you will only be permitted to include information that is specifically allowed. Freedom of expression will have no place under Directive 80/181.

Equally worrying is the fact that the Directive may be applied arbitrarily across the EU. There is already confusion surrounding the status of sports materials, as the responsible Commissioner has been quoted as saying that sport will be exempt - because it is a hobby. Suppliers to this multi-billion Euro 'hobby' business may therefore still be able to label tracksuits and swimwear in inches, and sport socks in UK and American shoe sizes. Where does it stop?

...The ASBCI, the British forum for clothing and textiles, has contacted its members on this subject and found that there is appreciable concern about the potential impact of this Directive. In view of this, they are supporting moves to lobby against the Directive being implemented in its current form and are keeping their interested members informed of developments. Other clothing industry associations are also becoming aware of the potential impact of this Directive and are looking into the matter. To paraphrase a DTI spokesman at a recent conference: "Never underestimate the ability of the EC to interfere with your business". Make sure you know what they are up to - and help influence them before it becomes a 'fait accompli'.

* * *

Federation of British Historic Vehicle Clubs
FBHVC, which exists to uphold the freedom to use old vehicles on the roads, "...supports BWMA's efforts to retain the right to use imperial and other non-SI units". On 8 February 2007, FBHVC raised the matter of EC Directive 80/181 with the All Party Parliamentary Historic Vehicle Group in Westminster.

Metric reversal in New York State

In January 2007, New York State's Department of Transportation announced that it is abandoning the metric system and reverting to inch-pound units. This increases the number of American state transport departments using US customary units to 48. Only two states remain on the metric scale (Montana and New Hampshire) and two are on dual measurements (New Jersey and Vermont).

The ill-fated Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) metric conversion process began in 1991 and set 30 September 1996 as the deadline for complete conversion. Computer conversion programs were developed and 150,000 metric/US unit conversion slide rules were distributed. FHWA also produced metric posters and "cubes" (small boxes with metric conversion information on all six sides). At its high point, in 2001, 13 states had switched to metric and seven were dual, before the effort collapsed.

In April 2002, US magazine *Insight on the News* said of New York State: "One of the states that has taken a hard line on metric is New York. Rather than back off due to the contractor-supplier problem, New York's Department of Transportation went the other way and ordered material suppliers to convert to metric. What this means is that manufacturers of goods such as cement and asphalt must change their plants over to the metric system if they want to get in on state contracts. Think about all the gauges and other monitoring and measuring devices involved in a manufacturing process and you'll see that this is no small task, and a mighty expensive one to boot. In a Rust Belt state where the construction industry is one of the few fields that has jobs to offer, it seems very strange to some observers that the state is being so heavy-handed. Apparently state officials figure the suppliers have no choice but to go along. Of course, the manufacturers do indeed have a choice. In a survey reported by the Association of General Contractors, some 118 manufacturing plants appear to be ignoring the state's demand, meaning they won't be supplying goods for the construction year ahead. Will the state wake up and realize that being on the forefront of metric conversion may have serious economic consequences?"

New York State's reversion to inch-pound units is expected to be complete by 2014.

Japanese Cosmetic Industry Association, message to the European Commission, March 2007: “Today, there are some countries which require non-SI units. Japanese cosmetic companies which have international business are marketing products with non-SI units as supplementary indications. If this indication will not be allowed after 2009, the impact to these Japanese manufacturers will be important. Even if it is foreseeable that these countries will change to SI units in the future, we would like to propose to postpone the deadline 2009 so that the confusion in the industry and in the market could be avoidable for Japanese manufacturers”.

Austrian Federal Economic Chamber, February 2007: “In Austria, the unit ‘inch’ (in German ‘zoll’) is often used as a supplementary indication, in particular in the gas and district (domestic) heating sector. Therefore, we are of the opinion that the deadline in Article 3 paragraph 2 of Directive 80/181/ECC should be extended”.

Measuring v. Making - comment

On the page opposite is the third and final part of Frederick Halsey’s article which appeared in BWMA’s Annual Report of 1905. Its key principles remain relevant today:

- Constructors and scientists have opposite experiences of measurement: the former have the power to choose quantities and dimensions; the latter, who measure things as they are, do not.
- Consequently, constructors deal with a limited number of selected measurements, whereas scientists deal with infinitely differing measurements.
- The former lean towards factors of two, three and four for ease of division, whereas the latter towards decimals for ease of calculation.
- To convert from one system to the other means changing the sizes of existing products, a consequence that is all too apparent to constructors, but not scientists, since scientists do not make products.
- ‘Scientific man’ urges the compulsory use of the metric system because he is ignorant as to any conception of measurement other than his own.

In 2007, key figures in the compulsory metrication movement continue to include scientists and academics. Here is a letter from the US Metric Association’s Public Relations Director Paul Trusten, R.Ph, to the people of *Tyre Trade News*:

“While I sympathize with those who face regulatory change in the EU, I must recount the fact that the Metric Directive has been postponed twice. Its impetus is not inspired by bureaucrats, but by the long-standing need for the establishment of one system of

measurement. Poetry, nationalism, conspiracy theories, and simple obstinacy and sloth have derailed this goal many times in the last century. But, in this new century, with the whole world a click away, it is time for us to roll up our sleeves and get to work making the change. The authors of metrication are not sorcerers, sadists, or symbolists, but scientists. Anyone who measures is a part of science, and this change involves all people, in all times”.

To ‘scientific man’, we must add ‘bureaucratic man’ who, similarly, does not make or sell products, but administers and makes rules for those that do.

The difference between makers/retailers and scientists/bureaucrats would not matter if the latter confined themselves to their roles of creating and enforcing definitions of units for the benefit of users. Instead, they busy themselves with deciding *which* system of units people should use. Mr Trusten, for example, refers to “one system of measurement”; the UK Metric Association website calls for a “single rational system of measurement”. Naturally, the system they choose for others to use is their own.

The advantage that ‘metricsters’ have over the rest of us is that is that scientists and bureaucrats represent the ‘establishment’; scientists use metric to draw up definitions of units, and bureaucrats use them to frame legal documents and policy. The result is that, so long as government encroaches, so too will the metric system, with the result that everyone, from village greengrocers to manufacturers of oil rigs, will endure interference over their choice of units.

Rubbing along together, by Gerry Hanson (a letter to The Times, February 2006)

“As one whose elementary school education in the 1930s and early 1940s embraced both metric and imperial measures (so that I could in arithmetic lessons work out how many square yards of carpet were needed to cover a room measured in metres), I concede that I am biased. However, I fear that Andrew Taylor is doomed to disappointment if he thinks this country will ever become fully metricated. We live quite happily in a dual system world. Cases of wine and boxes of eggs are in dozens, hosepipe may be sold in metric length but diameters are in inches. Computer and TV screens are always quoted in inches.

Wherever Mr Taylor goes in the world, he will find that bicycle wheel diameters are quoted in inches, and tyre pressures are in pounds per square inch. No one ever says: “Give him 2.54 centimetres and he’ll take 1.609 kilometres”. I ask the ironmonger for 2-inch screws, not 5.08cms. Shirt collar sizes are always in inches and I’m fairly confident that, when asked his height, Mr Taylor does not state it in centimetres.

Even the generations brought up with metric teaching still find it easier to understand a foot than 30 centimetres. Napoleon failed to impose full metrication in Europe despite his best efforts; in French markets one still buys fruit by the pound (livre)”.

From the Archives: "Measuring v. Making" by Frederick Halsey, New York. This is the third and final part of an article that appeared in BWMA's annual report of July 1905:

Having shown why the constructor and the manufacturer do not actively favour the basic principle of the metric system, it remains to show why they oppose the introduction of the metric system as they do, and here again we shall find the explanation to lie in this fundamental difference between scientific and industrial measurements. The opposition to the metric system arises from the fact that its adoption involves a complete change in this established list of sizes upon which all mechanical manufacturing is based; it involves the discarding of the sizes which are shown by the lines on English scales and the substitution thereof of the sizes which are shown by the lines on metric scales, and there you have the anti-metric case in a nutshell. This difficulty is peculiar to industrial measurements; there is nothing to compare with it in scientific measurements.

To us, this is the commonplace of commonplaces; absolutely simple, perfectly obvious, painfully elementary, but it is exactly what we cannot get the scientific man to understand. You may search scientific pro-metric literature almost in vain for so much as a reference to this matter; you may search it absolutely in vain for any discussion of it which is entitled to be called by that name. Scientific pro-metric literature recognises the break in technical literature, and it discusses this very, very gingerly, though it does recognise it; and it also recognises the expense of new weighing and measuring instruments, learning to use them and learning to think in the new units, but it recognises no other difficulty whatever. These difficulties, you will observe, are precisely what the scientific man would have to face were such a change impending in the scientific world today. They are the measurer's, not the maker's, difficulties.

From the standpoint of the manufacturer a change in the list of established sizes to which things are made is almost the only thing worth discussing; it is precisely the thing which scientific pro-metric literature does not discuss at all. And those who know so little of the subject that they do not even recognise the chief point at issue, speak as with the authority of a Moses, and tell us that our case is based on ignorance and prejudice; and when we resent it, they reprove us for our bad manners and our intemperate language. And all because this exercise of choice - resulting in a defined list of sizes to which things are made - is foreign to the scientific use of weight and measure, and foreign to the scientific man's conception of the subject.

You will observe that the effect of such a fundamental change upon manufacturing industry is especially and peculiarly a manufacturer's question; you will observe that it is not in the smallest degree a scientific question; you will observe that there is nothing in the scientific man's knowledge, training or experience, to qualify him to speak with authority upon it. His knowledge, training and experience do not lead him to so much as recognise its existence. And yet for a century the scientific world has presumed to assume charge of these matters and to brand with ignorance all who differ from it.

Then there is the paramount importance of continuity. The 1/2-inch Sellers standard screw thread has 13 turns per inch. Mr. Welsh, the original superintendent of the Westinghouse Air Brake Works, for some reason, now

unknown, objected to an odd numbered thread, and he therefore adopted the Sellers standard, except that for the 1/2-inch bolt, he adopted 12 threads instead of 13. This decision has proven to be a mistake and a nuisance, and the company would today be very glad to change it, but it finds itself powerless to do so. The immense number of brake equipments, which are out all over the world, the constant call for renewals, repairs and extensions makes the simple necessity for continuity paramount above all others. What a significant example! This great company finds itself powerless to change the number of threads upon one size of bolt by one turn per inch, but our metric friends tell us that we can change everything and almost without difficulty.

We have thousands of cases like the Westinghouse bolt. Some of these represent the practice of the entire country - for example, screw threads, pipe shafting, bar iron, and the thicknesses to which lumber is sawn. Others represent entire industries - for example, the numerous railroad and Master Car Builders' standards, by which interchange of railroad cars throughout the country is facilitated and in many cases made possible. Others again represent individual factories. In all, the basic principle is the same—the simple necessity for continuity is a thousand-fold more important than all the advantages which can be claimed for the making of these things to metric instead of English sizes. The laborious efforts of the past forty years toward standardisation in all branches of mechanical work are simply efforts to secure and to assure this continuity. Consider for a moment the importance of uniformity in the various coupling devices between railroad cars for connecting the cars, their steam and air hose. It is by this uniformity that the interchange of cars throughout the country is made possible. Destroy this uniformity, and this interchange becomes impossible. Picture the infinite effort which has been the price of the present uniformity, and then contrast it with the simple-minded manner in which the metric advocates propose to throw the results away in the pursuit of a simple fad.

These things will not be changed because they cannot be. Should the attempt be made, the result will be here what it has been elsewhere—a partial change. We will make the easy but not the difficult changes, and between the two will be an ill-defined region in which changes will be constantly attempted; sometimes with success, sometimes with failure, always with confusion. The changes made in the USA will ultimately be fewer than elsewhere because of the immensely greater development of manufacturing here than in any metric country at the time when the system was adopted. The result of this conjoint use of two systems will be here what it has been elsewhere, an infinite number of conversions and re-conversions between incommensurate units in the face of which any possible theoretical advantage of any possible system will be hopelessly lost.

Consider the trifling development of manufacturing industry a century ago, consider how even with this trifling development the old units have in some industries resisted all efforts to dislodge them, and then ask how much time will be required with the existing enormous development to complete a change begun at the present time. I believe that the history of the metric system justifies the expectation that such a change begun under present conditions will not be complete at the end of a thousand years, and that is why we fight the metric system.

Annual General Meeting & Conference

Saturday 19th May 2007

Victory Services Club, 63 Seymour Street,
London W2 2HF

Tel: 020 7616 8305

(off Edgware Road, just north of Marble
Arch)

AGM 10.30 for 11.0am - free to members

The following nominations have been proposed and seconded:

Chairman Michael Plumbe
Director John Gardner
Hon Treasurer & Membership Secretary Lee Consterdine
Press Officer David Delaney
Production and Distribution Robert Stevens
Secretary for Honorary Members William Peters
Consultant Bruce Robertson
Committee Members
Fabian Olins, Philip Pitt, Derek Norman, Professor Antony Flew, Pamela Shaw-Hesketh, Simon Hooton, John Strange

Conference 1.30 for 2.0pm - £5 admission on door

We are delighted to have the following speakers at our Conference in the afternoon:

Malcolm Ball is the Acting-Chairman of the Association of Suppliers to Clothing Industry. Malcolm attended the meeting with the DTI in November 2006 and recently published an article, an extract of which is in this *Yardstick*.

Nigel Sitwell is the Director of Ocean Explorer Maps, which creates and publishes maps geared to the needs and interests of passengers on cruise ships.

Rodney Atkinson is the author of the British Declaration of Independence, and is opposed to Britain's membership of supranational bodies, such as the EU and UN.

Further contributions by:

Vivian Linacre, BWMA Founder and President
Neil Herron of the Metric Martyr Defence Fund
Warwick Cairns, www.warwickcairns.com
John Gardner, BWMA Director

Minutes of 2006 AGM, held on 6 May at the Victory Services Club, London W1

Present: 45 members

Michael Plumbe welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies were received from: Graham Bostock, Sheila Eustace, Fabian Olins, William Peters, Philip Pitt, Philip

Ivey Ray, Bruce Robertson, Frederick Rodriguez, Pamela Shaw-Hesketh, Lord Phillips and some 10 members.

Minutes of AGM on 23 April 2005, published in *Yardstick* 25, were taken as read and were agreed nem con (proposer D Norman, seconder R Willow).

Hon Treasurer's Report and Accounts The Treasurer presented the Accounts showing a healthy balance. Mr Consterdine made a statement on the refusal of Alliance & Leicester to let BWMA open a savings account with them. This matter is being pursued. Subject to the satisfaction of the Auditor, the Accounts were unanimously agreed (proposer J Strange, seconder P Kirby). A vote of thanks to Lee Consterdine for his excellent stewardship.

Constitution: Mr Plumbe expressed the need for a new Constitution as the existing one no longer reflects our operational needs. Also, there is a possibility that we might change our status, to avoid potential personal liabilities. We need a satisfactory "basic" Constitution before making any such change. Mr Plumbe thanked Sheila Eustace, who had supplied a model from which to work, and John Gardner who had adapted this to our new needs. Gareth Hardwick suggested a change regarding the Chairman's vote; this was accepted. Mr Willow commented that dissolution should involve a postal ballot to decide disposal of funds. The Chairman mentioned that any further changes could be incorporated next year. After a short discussion it was AGREED (one vote against and one abstention) that the new Constitution should be adopted (proposer V Linacre, seconder P Kirby).

Any Other Business: Flora Jenner commented that the Tory Leader, Cameron, has gone on record as wanting to conserve our traditional measures. This generated some rather cynical discussion.

Gareth Hardwick praised *The Yardstick* as excellent. Robert Carnaghan said we should do more to get our message across, especially now we had the survey done by Warwick Cairns.

A member asked that we should have a template for a letter to be sent easily to those who print metric-only catalogues.

Robert Stevens mentioned the new rules and sizes for postage of letters and packets.

(This address replaces the PO Box)

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