



METRIC PROGRESS REPORT: United States Agency for International Development FY2019

BACKGROUND:

The Presidential Executive Order 12770 and the Metric Conversion Act designates the International System of Units (SI), commonly known as the metric system of measurement, as the preferred system of weights and measures for use in trade and commerce, and requires the use of the SI system, to the extent economically feasible, by each federal agency and department in its procurements, grants, and other business-related activities.

Federal agencies and departments are required to formulate transition plans and to communicate them to the Metric Program at the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST).

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

SCOPE:

The U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) 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.

Fiscal Year (FY) 2019 was another record-breaking year for acquisition and assistance (A&A) obligations at USAID, with a total of \$17.2 billion. This exceeds obligations that have gone through A&A mechanisms in recent history.

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.

In 2010, USAID informed its personnel that the European Union metric only requirements became effective. USAID has also established that in accordance with Federal Standard 376B, the metric system of measurement must be used for specifications and quantitative

data that are incorporated in or required by USAID-financed acquisition and assistance (AIDAR 752.211-70 Language and measurement and 2 CFR 700.6 Metric system of measurement).

For USAID, 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 ADS Chapter 323 was issued by the agency's Office of Acquisition and Assistance on March 10, 2020.

Although USAID feels that the agency has already made a successful metric conversion, it will continue to monitor the mandatory requirements and will meet with industry regarding their concerns and leverage the findings and relevant feedback from "USAID's Industry Liaison", which was established in 2019.

In addition to the regulations that have been established to monitor compliance of for-profit organizations, the Contract Audit and Support Division within the Bureau for Management's Office of Acquisition and Assistance (M/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 2 CFR 200.513 under Subpart F "Audit Requirements".

USAID anticipates continued success in the application of the metrics system in its acquisition and assistance awards. It also will continue to work across the federal enterprise and among the business community members to increase the awareness and adoption of the metric system in international awards.

The following is a summary 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 March 10, 2020.
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. Increased ability to monitor the impact of mandatory requirements, outreach and impact to USAID's industry partners regarding impacts via the establishment of "USAID's Industry Liaison", which was established in 2019.

PROPOSED EXCEPTIONS:

For USAID the only proposed exceptions to the use of the metric system relate to its waiver process. The requirement to use the metric system of measurement may be waived when the USAID Metric Executive, the Contracting/Agreement Officer, or the USAID official who approves the procurement/assistance requirement 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 procedures specified in AIDAR 711.002-70 must be followed when granting a waiver to the requirement to use the metric system.

USAID has and will continue to support relevant initiatives that may affect parties external to USAID in their application and adoption of metric system.