

## SUBCHAPTER I—METRIC CONVERSION POLICY FOR FEDERAL AGENCIES

### PART 273—METRIC CONVERSION POLICY FOR FEDERAL AGENCIES

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#### § 273.1 Purpose.

To provide policy direction for Federal agencies in their transition to use of the metric system of measurement.

#### § 273.2 Definition.

*Metric system* means the International System of Units (SI) established by the General Conference of Weights and Measures in 1960, as interpreted or modified from time to time for the United States by the Secretary of Commerce under the authority of the Metric Conversion Act of 1975 and the Metric Education Act of 1978.

*Other business-related activities* means measurement sensitive commercial or business directed transactions or programs, *i.e.*, standard or specification development, publications, or agency statements of general applicability and future effect designed to implement, interpret, or prescribe law or policy or describing the procedure or practice requirements of an agency. “Measurement sensitive” means the choice of measurement unit is a critical component of the activity, *i.e.*, an agency rule/regulation to collect samples or measure something at specific distances or to specific depths, specifications requiring intake or discharge of a product to certain volumes or flow rates, guidelines for clearances between objects for safety, security or environmental purposes, etc.

#### § 273.3 General policy.

The Omnibus Trade and Competitive-ness Act of 1988 (Pub. L. 100–418, section 5164) amended the Metric Conversion Act of 1975 to, among other things, require that each Federal agency, by a date certain and to the extent economically feasible by the end of the fiscal year 1992, use the metric system of measurement in its procurements, grants, and other business-related activities, except to the extent that such use is impractical or is likely to cause significant inefficiencies or loss of markets to United States firms, such as when foreign competitors are producing competing products in non-metric units.

(a) The Director of the National Institute of Standards and Technology will assist in coordinating the efforts of Federal agencies in meeting their obligations under the Metric Conversion Act, as amended.

(b) Federal agencies shall coordinate and plan for the use of the metric system in their procurements, grants and other business-related activities consistent with the requirements of the Metric Conversion Act, as amended. Federal agencies shall encourage and support an environment which will facilitate the transition process. When taking initiatives, they shall give due consideration to known effects of their actions on State and local governments and the private sector, paying particular attention to effects on small business.

(c) Each Federal agency shall be responsible for developing plans, establishing necessary organizational structure, and allocating appropriate resources to carry out this policy.

[56 FR 160, Jan. 2, 1991. Redesignated at 56 FR 41283, Aug. 20, 1991, and further redesignated and amended at 78 FR 4766, Jan. 23, 2013]

#### § 273.4 Guidelines.

Each agency shall:

(a) Establish plans and dates for use of the metric system in procurements, grants and other business-related activities;