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1984 U.S. METRIC ASSOCIATION ANNUAL MEETING- CONFERENCE

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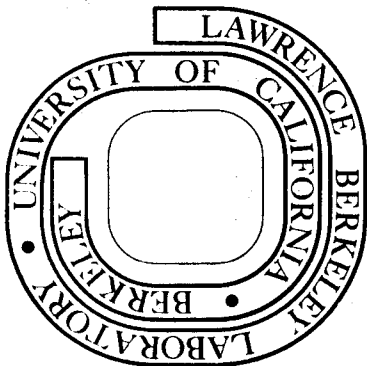
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ENGINEERING NOTE		AA0139	M6308	2
AUTHOR	DEPARTMENT	LOCATION	DATE	
J. Davey	Mechanical	Berkeley	November 16, 1984	
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MECHANICAL DEPARTMENT METRICATION				
TITLE				
1984 U.S. METRIC ASSOCIATION ANNUAL MEETING-CONFERENCE				

The U.S. Metric Association (USMA) is a voluntary, nationwide, nonprofit organization founded in 1916 to promote the use of the metric system of measurements in United States schools, commerce, and industry. USMA publishes the quarterly "U.S. Metric Association Newsletter" with information on metrication developments in the United States and other countries. (Copies available in the Metric Library, Engineering Liaison, Building 90, Room 2062). USMA is an affiliate of the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS). Current membership is approximately 1200.

The annual meeting of the USMA was held in San Antonio, Texas, on October 19-20, 1984. The business meeting and conference was well attended, with some forty-five reporters representing education, private industry, and government agencies reporting on the national metric effort.

In general, the reporting reflected a slight decline in the overall metric conversion effort. Most agreed, however, without a Federal Government mandate (The Metric Act of 1975 supports the voluntary conversion) it will be economics that continues to be the driving force.

The following are excerpts from reports presented, and reflect the prevailing metric atmosphere.

GERALD T. UNDERWOOD, DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF METRIC PROGRAMS, U.S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE.

The U.S. role in world trade is continuing to slip. Pacific rim countries are increasing their markets, all producing goods in metric. "Metric in the U.S. is slower than predicted ten years ago, public support is poor-poor".

TOM FERRELL, PRIVATE FASTENER CO.

Gross annual U.S. Fastener business is currently \$4.5 billion. Metrics' share of this volume is \$100 million divided among some 12 companies. It is estimated that the metric fastener business will increase to \$1 billion per year over the next five years due to the expected replacement of auto bolts. (GM fasteners, except for the Corvette, are entirely metric. Ford is converting, and the entire auto industry will be metricated by 1990).

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SYDNEY D. ANDREWS, DIRECTOR, DIV. OF STANDARDS, FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND CONSUMER SERVICES.

Florida is one state with highway signs in both metric and customary. The 1975 Metric Act stirred early interest which was intensified because of Florida's status as a tourist state. Media apathy was evident by poor coverage of the initial sign installation ceremony. However, when the sign was immediately stolen, reporters and photographers turned out the next day to cover the crime. Gasoline pumps were converted, with many operators using the opportunity to raise prices, causing a public outcry. As a result, few, if any, converted gasoline meters exist today, Disney World-Epcot Center, booked as the International-Future-World has no metric signs anywhere. "Metric activity is at a low point in Florida."

IRA J. EPSTEIN, OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR OF STANDARDIZATION AND ACQUISITION SUPPORT, DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE.

D.O.D. has firm policy in metric, with all specifications to be in metric by 1990. They are developing a handbook on metric due in 1985, but must currently go overseas for metric equipment.

E. JAMES TEW, METRIC EDUCATION PANEL - TEXAS INSTRUMENTS

Texas Instruments' approach to metric conversion (part of plant operations) was to establish an introductory program that included a test of their shop and technical personnel. They found a good place to start was with micrometer and vernier calipers. Comparative testing with customary and metric tools showed metric tools were faster by 17.7%.

While these excerpts give a mixed, if not disappointing view for the metric advocate, they do show an open forum approach to the situation.

LBL will continue to keep abreast of any developments and continue to add any new metric data to its files.

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