



DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENT

ATTENTION:

DIRECTOR AND SURVEYOR GENERAL X
FIELD OPERATIONS DIVISION
LEGAL SURVEYS DIVISION
MAP PRODUCTION DIVISION

May 21, 1976

CIRCULAR LETTER TO ALL BRITISH COLUMBIA LAND SURVEYORS
AND ALL REGISTRARS, LAND REGISTRY OFFICES

Sir:

Re: Metric Conversion

It is advisable that all Land Surveyors be given early advice that conduct of surveys under the Land Act and all surveys for deposit in the Land Registry Offices will be required in metric measurement in the foreseeable future.

The situation is that the Provincial Metric Conversion Co-ordinating Committee has set January 1st, 1977 as the target date for change over, as far as land measurement is concerned. It must be made clear that at this time this is a committee decision, and all departments concerned are working towards this date. Some of the main concerns that are in motion are: -

1. All levels of government that issue regulations and by-laws have been contacted. Specifically Municipalities have been advised to get working on their by-laws as they affect subdivision, lot sizes, set backs etc. etc. This is strictly between the Department of Municipal Affairs and those they control. Land Surveyors are liable to be asked for advice from these local bodies. A directive did go out to Municipalities wherein they were advised against merely converting feet to a direct equivalent in metres. This is known as 'soft' conversion. What was proposed to them is to adapt new whole number standards, where possible, in metres. An example is, that it has been decided that where a 66 foot is presently called for, the new width will be 20 metres. The problem is very complex and consideration has to be given to avoid, where setbacks are concerned, turning all existing structures into a non conforming status.

2. Amendments to the Land Act and Land Registry Act have been drafted and should appear in Bill form at the present Legislative sitting. Both these Bills will allow for the new dimensions to come into effect by Proclamation at a suitable date. (presently thought to be January 1st, 1977)

One can foresee that a tremendous amount of work must be done for everything to be timed perfectly and it is beyond comprehension to believe that someone will not fall behind. Therefore the target date will be an elastic one. Certainly

surveys in progress, when an official announcement is made, will be allowed to be completed in the old unit of measurement, for a reasonable length of time and it is possible that some large new projects may be allowed to be deposited in new measurements, before that actual target date - by local arrangement. The various units of chains, feet and metres will be with us for generations so that there is little point in insisting on a hard and fast date for change. Just that the change over should be as quick as possible.

The Surveyor General's regulations in the "Blue Book" have all been prepared for metric change over and there are very few changes of concern to Surveyors at this time. Most of the detail can await passage of amendments to Acts and Regulations.

A few points of which you should be aware are as follows: -

A. Scales of plans for deposit under the Land Registry Act will be as follows:

1:1, 1:1.25, 1:2, 1:2.5 or 1:5 or multiples of same by integral powers of ten. For example a few of the existing and near equivalent metric scales are listed below. These scales are now available from most suppliers.

1" = 40, 50 or 60 feet	-	use 1:5 00
1" = 80 feet		use 1:1 000
1" = 100 feet		use 1:1 000 or 1:1 250
1" = 200 feet		use 1:2 500
1" = 400 feet		use 1:5 000
1" = 1000 feet		use 1:10 000 or 1:12 500

B. Plan sizes will not change and will be direct equivalents in millimetres of the present sizes (whereas new metric sizes have been proposed in many publications they have not found ready acceptance as yet).

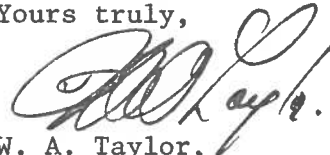
C. Dimensions will be in metres and decimals thereof - all angles and bearings will remain in degrees, minutes and seconds - it is intended to allow full circle bearings in new surveys with optional retention of the quadrantal system in some cases.

D. Areas will be shown in hectares to four significant digits - eg. 0.1234 ha, 1.234 ha, 12.34 ha or 1234 ha.

It is suggested that as a basic text on principles of the metric system that every surveyor should acquire a copy of "Metric Practice Guide, CSA 234.1, 1976" available from Standard Sales Department, Canadian Standards Association, 178 Rexdale Boulevard, Rexdale, Ontario. M9W 1R1. The cost is \$4.50 (if prepaid, no invoice charge).

Further advice on progress (or delay in implementation) will be made available to you, as soon as there is anything positive to report.

Yours truly,



W. A. Taylor,
Acting Surveyor General.