

Metrology

2008/0227(COD) - 03/12/2008 - Document attached to the procedure

This Commission staff working document is based on the public consultation report on the simplification of 8 old approach metrology Directives.

To recall, measuring instruments are essential to ensure accuracy of measurement, notably for transactions by consumers and industry in every day life: examples include water meters, taximeters, electricity meters and weighing machines. Eight “old approach” directives (setting very detailed technical specifications) regulate measuring instruments used for tasks requiring legal metrological control under the framework directive 71/316/EEC in the following sectors:

- Cold Water Meters for Non-Clean Water (Directive 75/33/EEC)
- Alcohol Meters and Alcohol Tables (Directive 75/765/EEC and 75/766/EEC)
- Medium and Above-Medium Accuracy Weights (Directive 71/317/EEC and 74/148/EEC)
- Tyre Pressure Gauges for Motor Vehicles (Directive 86/217/EEC)
- Standard Mass of Grain (Directive 74/347/EEC)
- Calibration of Ship Tanks (Directive 71/349/EEC).

A public consultation on this issue started on 21 May 2008 and ended on 15 July 2008. The Commission services published a key issues document for the public consultation. Concerns have been expressed that currently these technical rules are not easily adaptable to technological progress and therefore risk hindering innovation.

Next to repeal, it gives as an option to include one or more of these sectors in the Measuring Instruments Directive (Directive 2004/22/EC). The public consultation document highlighted 10 issues, the reactions to which will subsequently be discussed in this document. Stakeholders were also invited to bring up any other issues that they consider relevant.

Information on the public consultation has been disseminated via the Your Voice in Europe site which is public and well known among professional organisations. Also there was an Enterprise e-mail alert that was distributed at the start of the consultation to 28 000 recipients as well as an e-mail alert to all those who had expressed their interest on this issue to the Commission services in the past.

This report examines the reactions that have been received. Secondly it presents the conclusions to be drawn with due regard to the Commission’s priority for simplification and better regulation.

This document has been prepared by the Commission services for consultation purposes. It does not in any way prejudice, or constitute the announcement of, any position on the part of the Commission concerning the issues covered.

The report concludes that the public consultation, a consultant study for the Commission and a final check with Member States show that there are no barriers to trade in the sectors. This is notably the case for technological innovative products which are not covered by the directives. Without barriers to trade, the impact assessment concludes there is no reason to harmonise. Moreover, repeal will have no major effects given that there exist international standards. These can serve as a basis for regulation by Member States, if needed, under the acceptance of mutual recognition.

The proposal by the Commission is to repeal the 8 old approach directives.