

TRANSFER OF FUNCTIONS

Act Feb. 14, 1903, transferred National Bureau of Standards from Treasury Department to Department of Commerce and Labor.

§ 204. Metric system authorized

It shall be lawful throughout the United States of America to employ the weights and measures of the metric system; and no contract or dealing, or pleading in any court, shall be deemed invalid or liable to objection because the weights or measures expressed or referred to therein are weights or measures of the metric system.

(R.S. § 3569.)

Editorial Notes

CODIFICATION

R.S. § 3569 derived from act July 28, 1866, ch. 301, § 1, 14 Stat. 339.

Statutory Notes and Related SubsidiariesSTUDY OF METRIC SYSTEM BY THE SECRETARY OF
COMMERCE

Pub. L. 90-472, Aug. 9, 1968, 82 Stat. 693, authorized the Secretary of Commerce to conduct a program of investigation, research, and survey to determine the impact of increasing worldwide use of the metric system on the United States; to appraise the desirability and practicability of increasing the use of metric weights and measures in the United States; to study the feasibility of retaining and promoting by international use of dimensional and other engineering standards based on the customary measurement units of the United States; and to evaluate the costs and benefits of alternative courses of action which might be feasible for the United States. The Secretary was directed to submit to the Congress such interim reports as he deemed desirable, and within three years after Aug. 9, 1968, a full and complete report of the findings made under the study, together with such recommendations as he considered to be appropriate and in the best interests of the United States. By its own terms, the Act expired thirty days after the submission of the final report.

§ 205. Metric system defined

The metric system of measurement shall be defined as the International System of Units as established in 1960, and subsequently maintained, by the General Conference of Weights and Measures, and as interpreted or modified for the United States by the Secretary of Commerce.

(R.S. § 3570; Pub. L. 110-69, title III, § 3013(c)(1), Aug. 9, 2007, 121 Stat. 598.)

Editorial Notes

CODIFICATION

R.S. § 3570 derived from act July 28, 1866, ch. 301, § 2, 14 Stat. 339, 340.

AMENDMENTS

2007—Pub. L. 110-69 amended section generally. Prior to amendment, section read as follows: “The tables in the schedule annexed shall be recognized in the construction of contracts and in all legal proceedings as establishing, in terms of the weights and measures on June 22, 1874, in use in the United States, the equivalents of the weights and measures expressed therein in terms of the metric system; and the tables may law-

fully be used for computing, determining, and expressing in customary weights and measures the weights and measures of the metric system.”

SUBCHAPTER II—METRIC CONVERSION**§ 205a. Congressional statement of findings**

The Congress finds as follows:

(1) The United States was an original signatory party to the 1875 Treaty of the Meter (20 Stat. 709), which established the General Conference of Weights and Measures, the International Committee of Weights and Measures and the International Bureau of Weights and Measures.

(2) Although the use of metric measurement standards in the United States has been authorized by law since 1866 (Act of July 28, 1866; 14 Stat. 339), this Nation today is the only industrially developed nation which has not established a national policy of committing itself and taking steps to facilitate conversion to the metric system.

(3) World trade is increasingly geared towards the metric system of measurement.

(4) Industry in the United States is often at a competitive disadvantage when dealing in international markets because of its non-standard measurement system, and is sometimes excluded when it is unable to deliver goods which are measured in metric terms.

(5) The inherent simplicity of the metric system of measurement and standardization of weights and measures has led to major cost savings in certain industries which have converted to that system.

(6) The Federal Government has a responsibility to develop procedures and techniques to assist industry, especially small business, as it voluntarily converts to the metric system of measurement.

(7) The metric system of measurement can provide substantial advantages to the Federal Government in its own operations.

(Pub. L. 94-168, § 2, Dec. 23, 1975, 89 Stat. 1007; Pub. L. 100-418, title V, § 5164(a), Aug. 23, 1988, 102 Stat. 1451.)

Editorial Notes

REFERENCES IN TEXT

Act of July 28, 1866; 14 Stat. 339, referred to in par. (2), is predecessor of R.S. § 3569 authorizing use of the metric system, which is classified to section 204 of this title.

AMENDMENTS

1988—Pars. (3) to (7). Pub. L. 100-418 added pars. (3) to (7).

Statutory Notes and Related Subsidiaries

SHORT TITLE OF 1996 AMENDMENT

Pub. L. 104-289, § 1, Oct. 11, 1996, 110 Stat. 3411, provided that: “This Act [enacting section 205f of this title, amending sections 205c and 205f of this title, and enacting provisions set out as notes under this section and section 205c of this title] may be cited as the ‘Savings in Construction Act of 1996’.”

SHORT TITLE

Pub. L. 94-168, § 1, Dec. 23, 1975, 89 Stat. 1007, provided: “That this Act [enacting this subchapter] may be cited as the ‘Metric Conversion Act of 1975’.”