

Going Metric

The facts

The Metric System was developed by French scientists and introduced in 1790 following the Revolution. It was part of their plan to reorganise their whole social and economic life without reference to their past.

The System

Length metre (m) = one ten-millionth part of the distance between the north pole and the Equator.

Capacity litre (l) = one thousandth of a cubic metre.

Weight kilogram (kg) = the weight of one litre of water (1000g)

Temperature Celsius (C) = one hundredth of the scale between freezing water (0C) and boiling water (100C)

The Advantages

1. The system is easier to learn and to use, being based on tens and multiples of ten.
2. There is a direct relationship between the units of length, capacity and weight.

The Costs

There has been no official estimate of the cost of changing to metric. No-one denies that there *will* be costs, but these must be linked with changes in production, which could save money in the long term.

Most firms which have completed the change and made substantial progress, have found the cost was less than expected.

Howard Brayton

October 1973