

ABSTRACT

Towards a New Measurement System (With Particular Reference To Trinidad And Tobago)

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Effective management control of any construction project depends on an officially recognized, universally understood, information network. In turn, measurement properly formulated and suitably expressed is an important component of this management control information system, since everything that goes into a construction project can only be meaningfully estimated, costed, administered, constructed, feedback and paid for if it has been measured in an orderly and reasonably accurate manner. Standard Methods of Measurement are documents that establish the rules by which such work can be uniformly quantified for cost monitoring purposes.

To justifiably fulfill its functions, a Standard Method of Measurement must synchronize with developments within the construction sector. Locally, very little has been done in this respect, the various revisions of the British (Building) Standard Method of Measurement being adopted in time, with current stagnation at the fifth edition (SMM5). Meanwhile, the English institutions, recognizing the need for continuing refinements, are preparing for SMM7. Again, in time, the latter may be embraced locally....but should it?

This project attempts to answer this question by, first, exploring the *raison d'être* of a Standard Method of Measurement. It will examine just how far contemporary measurement standards 'measure up' to the varying degrees of quantification required by the different interests within the Sector, with comparison being made with the American system which operates without definitive Standard Methods of Measurement. Emphasis will be placed on considering improvements to construction measurement, so that it could provide a feasible breakdown of the complexities of projects into manageable units of work, readily identifiable by all parties, throughout the stages of preparation, tendering, construction and commissioning. The role of computer technology will also be regarded in conjunction with the above. Conclusions and recommendations will then be proffered, based on the foregoing analysis.