

## SI NOTICE (B3)

“The International System of Units, the SI, has been used around the world as the preferred system of units, the basic language for science, technology, industry and trade since it was established in 1960 by a resolution at the 11th meeting of the Conférence Générale des Poids et Mesures, the CGPM (known in English as the General Conference on Weights and Measures). [...]

“The SI has always been a practical and dynamic system that has evolved to exploit the latest scientific and technological developments. In particular, the tremendous advances in atomic physics and quantum metrology made over the last 50 years have enabled the definitions of the second, the metre, and the practical representation of the electrical units to take advantage of atomic and quantum phenomena to achieve levels of accuracy for realizing the respective units limited only by our technical capability and not by the definitions themselves. [...]

“The SI is a consistent system of units for use in all aspects of life, including international trade, manufacturing, security, health and safety, protection of the environment, and in the basic science that underpins all of these. The system of quantities underlying the SI and the equations relating them are based on the present description of nature and are familiar to all scientists, technologists and engineers.

“The definition of the SI units is established in terms of a set of seven defining constants. The complete system of units can be derived from the fixed values of these defining constants, expressed in the units of the SI. These seven defining constants are the most fundamental feature of the definition of the entire system of units. These particular constants were chosen after having been identified as being the best choice, taking into account the previous definition of the SI, which was based on seven base units, and progress in science. [...]

“To be of any practical use, these units not only have to be defined, but they also have to be realized physically for dissemination. In the case of an artefact, the definition and the realization are equivalent – a path that was pursued by advanced ancient civilizations. Although this is simple and clear, artefacts involve the risk of loss, damage or change. The other types of unit definitions are increasingly abstract or idealized. Here, the realizations are separated conceptually from the definitions so that the units can, as a matter of principle, be realized independently at any place and at any time. In addition, new and superior realizations may be introduced as science and technologies develop, without the need to redefine the unit. These advantages – most obviously seen with the history of the definition of the metre from artefacts through an atomic reference transition to the fixed numerical value of the speed of light – led to the decision to define all units by using defining constants. [...]

“The definitions of the SI units, as decided by the CGPM, represent the highest reference level for measurement traceability to the SI.

“Metrology institutes around the world establish the practical realizations of the definitions in order to allow for traceability of measurements to the SI. The Consultative Committees provide the framework for establishing the equivalence of the realizations in order to harmonize traceability world-wide.

“Standardization bodies may specify further details for quantities and units and rules for their application, where these are needed by interested parties. Whenever SI units are involved, these standards must refer to the definitions by the CGPM. Many such specifications are listed for example

in the standards developed by the International Organization for Standardization and the International Electrotechnical Commission (ISO/IEC 80000 series of international standards).

“Individual countries have established rules concerning the use of units by national legislation, either for general use or for specific areas such as commerce, health, public safety and education. In almost all countries, this legislation is based on the SI. The International Organization of Legal Metrology (OIML) is charged with the international harmonization of the technical specifications of this legislation.”<sup>1</sup>

It is from the above extract that the decision was drawn to use the SI as this work's primary unitary system and, as such, all units are traceable back to this basic system. The Bureau International des Poids et Mesures, the BIPM (known in English as the International Bureau of Weights and Measures) is the direct source of all unitary definitions made within this work and should be considered the sole reference for metrology within this work.

“The value of a quantity is generally expressed as the product of a number and a unit. The unit is simply a particular example of the quantity concerned which is used as a reference, and the number is the ratio of the value of the quantity to the unit.

“For a particular quantity different units may be used. For example, the value of the speed  $v$  of a particle may be expressed as  $v = 25 \text{ m/s}$  or  $v = 90 \text{ km/h}$ , where metre per second and kilometre per hour are alternative units for the same value of the quantity speed.

“Before stating the result of a measurement, it is essential that the quantity being presented is adequately described. This may be simple, as in the case of the length of a particular steel rod, but can become more complex when higher accuracy is required and where additional parameters, such as temperature, need to be specified.

“When a measurement result of a quantity is reported, the *estimated value* of the measurand (the quantity to be measured), and the *uncertainty* associated with that value, are necessary. Both are expressed in the same unit.”<sup>1</sup>

When units, symbols and uncertainty are used in this work, it is in accordance with the latest guidance from the BIPM, which is published in *The International System of Units (SI) 9th Edition* (2019)<sup>1</sup>, *Evaluation of Measurement Data — Guide to the Expression of Uncertainty in Measurement (JCGM 100:2008)* (2008)<sup>2</sup>, and *International Vocabulary of Metrology – Basic and General Concepts and Associated Terms (VIM) 3rd Edition (JCGM 200:2012)* (2012)<sup>3</sup>. Additional guidance for uncertainty can be found in *The NIST Reference on Constants, Units, and Uncertainty*<sup>4</sup>. The SI is defined within this work by the above statement and the *D6 – SI Unit Definitions* and *D7 – SI Defining Physical Constants* datasheets. Additional companion sheets are also provided to aid the use of this unitary system.

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<sup>1</sup> BIPM. (2019). Le Système International d'Unités / The International System of Units (9th ed). Bureau international des poids et mesures. [http://www.bipm.org/en/si/si\\_brochure](http://www.bipm.org/en/si/si_brochure)

<sup>2</sup> BIPM. (2008). JCGM 100:2008 Evaluation of Measurement Data—Guide to the Expression of Uncertainty in Measurement. Bureau international des poids et mesures. <https://www.iso.org/sites/JCGM/GUM/JCGM100/C045315e.html?csnumber=50461>

<sup>3</sup> BIPM. (2012). JCGM 200:2012 International Vocabulary of Metrology – Basic and General Concepts and Associated Terms (VIM) (3rd ed). Bureau international des poids et mesures. [https://www.bipm.org/documents/20126/2071204/JCGM\\_200\\_2012.pdf/f0e1ad45-d337-bbeb-53a6-15fe649d0ff1](https://www.bipm.org/documents/20126/2071204/JCGM_200_2012.pdf/f0e1ad45-d337-bbeb-53a6-15fe649d0ff1)

<sup>4</sup> NIST. (2017). Uncertainty of Measurement Results from NIST. <https://physics.nist.gov/cuu/Uncertainty/index.html>