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REPORT OF THE ENGINEERING VICE-PRESIDENT ON STANDARDIZATION*

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The procedure necessary for the formulation of War Standards for Motion Picture Equipment and Processes was described in an earlier paper which has appeared in the April, 1944, issue of the JOURNAL of the Society of Motion Picture Engineers, pages 211-229. The planning, initiation and prosecution of the major project of the preparation, study and issuance of the corresponding specifications have afforded the Society of Motion Picture Engineers an opportunity to collaborate both with the military forces, the War Production Board and the motion picture industry along lines which, it is believed, have been of constructive assistance to the war effort.

In this report, there will be discussed the nature and course of the work which has been carried on since the activities of the ASA War Standards Committee on Photography and Cinematography-Z52 were initiated.

Prior to such detailed consideration, it is desirable to outline the major elements necessary to the success of a plan for wartime specifications of complex products needed by the Armed Forces. These elements include:

(1) The formulation by the military forces of their needs, usually in the form of a list of the products and methods for which specifications are desired, as well as the scope, degree of detail, method of presentation, and field of application of a corresponding specification. It was fortunate that the U. S. Army Signal Corps, U. S. Army Air Forces, U. S. Army Engineer Corps, Bureau of Aeronautics, U. S. Navy, and U. S. Marine Corps were prepared to present their problems and needs in detail. Particularly active in this

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regard were all the members of the present Armed Forces Committee.

(2) The availability of committees or groups of highly skilled engineers and technical men active in the field of development and production of the devices needed by the military services, such groups being preferably of long standing and experience and accordingly ready to organize and prepare on short notice to attack and solve problems of a nature generally similar to those which they have been previously considering.

By great good fortune, the SMPE was in an excellent position to make available to the military services, or any other appropriate agency, the long experience and skill of its various committees and subcommittees active in certain fields. The Engineering Vice-President of the Society, in conjunction with the Chairman of the Committee on Standards, Mr. F. T. Bowditch; the Chairman of the ASA Sectional Committee on Motion Pictures-Z22, Dr. Alfred N. Goldsmith; and the future Chairman of the Armed Forces Committee, Capt. Lloyd T. Goldsmith, had arranged for the organization or continuation of the activities of a major group of engineering committees of the Society which, with expanded membership, proved highly effective in the type of specification preparation required by the military services.

The roster of the Society's committees was examined and the following committees and their chairmen were selected as ready and suitable for this work. Accordingly, it is desired at this time to express the thanks of the Society and its officers for the loyal and willing service rendered by the chairmen and membership of the following committees:

Committee	Chairman
Subcommittee A on 16-Mm Cinematography (Z52)	J. B. Contner
Subcommittee B on 16-Mm Sound (Z52)	J. A. Maurer
Subcommittee C on 16-Mm Laboratory Practice (Z52)	M. R. Boyer
Subcommittee D on 16-Mm Projection (Z52)	A. G. Zimmerman

It is certain that but for the immediate availability of these committees, their chairmen and their membership, it would have been difficult indeed to have undertaken the necessary tasks of equipment and method specifications for the military services which were urgently required.

(3) The sponsorship of the entire specification project by a governmental agency in a position to render guidance and financial support

to the project, as well as the existence and availability of a standardizing body of long experience capable of acting as the secretariat of the various specification groups or committees. The task of preparation of specifications involves complexities, need for manpower, and incidental facilities and cost which are usually not fully appreciated by those undertaking a task of such magnitude. The SMPE is thoroughly capable of handling normal standardization projects in peacetime at a reasonable rate of progress which is all that is required under such circumstances. It is unlikely, however, that the Society could have provided the clerical and technical force necessary to act as an effective secretariat for the specification committees under the conditions of greatly accelerated operation and widely expanded scope and detail requisite for specifications needed under wartime conditions by the military services.

However, the American Standards Association had previously been engaged in a War Standards project of somewhat similar nature to that here under consideration. Its expense in these directions was extensive and its staff adequate to handle all secretarial and clerical activities. Furthermore, it had enjoyed the financial backing of the War Production Board in this earlier War Standards project, and had demonstrated its capability of handling such a secretariat within acceptable financial limitations.

Dr. Alfred N. Goldsmith (member, Committee on Standards) had been actively engaged in the earlier project mentioned under this heading and was acquainted with the problems which were involved. He suggested that the Committee on Standards of the SMPE and the Armed Forces enter into corresponding arrangements with the War Production Board, as a financial sponsor, and the American Standards Association, as a secretariat, in order to speed up the project and to insure its successful handling.

(4) Adequate representation of all individuals, groups, engineering societies, as well as interested individuals of specific phases of the motion picture industry are essential as membership on committees to assure unification and agreement on specifications that would receive general acceptance. In the undertaking, the facilities of the Research Council of the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences, manufacturers of equipment, motion picture film, accessories, and processing plants (motion picture laboratories) were requested to assist in the task as cooperative workers.

These elements have all been coordinated and have been working

together in the unified effort of producing specifications in accord with the requirements of the Armed Forces. Progress has been steadily forward for the past 4 months which will continue as long as the Armed Forces have demands to be satisfied by specification preparation. The following presentations of progress reports of the chairmen of various subcommittees of ASA War Standards Committee on Photography and Cinematography-Z52 will fully show the status of specification work on a number of assignments. The results of the work reported will illustrate the magnitude of the task, the ability of the personnel involved and the cooperative spirit.