

## Consultation factsheet – Length measures in use for trade

A summary of the length measures in use for trade consultation, which includes an overview of the *general certificate of approval for material measures of length* and the potential / actual impacts the changes may have on the identified stakeholders.



The Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment (MBIE) would like your feedback on the ***Length measures in use for trade*** consultation.

This factsheet includes a summary of the *general certificate of approval for material measures of length* and the potential / actual impacts the changes may / will have on the identified stakeholders and has been created to support people and organisations who want to make a submission.

## Background

Many businesses already use length measures for trade purposes. However, the control over these is limited. The proposals in this consultation seek to regulate length measures from manufacture through to use by a retail business.

Historically, length measures have not been approved by MBIE and the regulatory control was focused on the transaction i.e., ensuring the goods offered / sold by reference to length were not short measure.

With a view to create a fair and level marketplace for businesses to operate and enhance consumer confidence, we propose that length measures are covered by the same regulatory controls that govern weighing instruments (checkout scales at the supermarket, meat scales in a butcher shop etc.), measuring instruments (fuel dispensers at a fuel station etc.) and volume measures (firewood trucks).

The proposals in this consultation include:

- introducing a general certificate of approval, which aims to cover most common length measures that are used for trade
- the potential impacts upon importers and manufacturers of length measures who sell them to New Zealand businesses for them to be used for trade purposes
- the potential impacts upon businesses who use a length measure to sell goods for a price that is determined by reference to a length
- the potential impacts upon consumers who buy goods by reference to length

NOTE: 'Goods sold by length' refers to non-prepackaged goods i.e., goods that are pre-cut or cut in front of the customer to a length, which is determined using a length measure.

## General certificate of approval for material measures of length

The general certificate confirms the types and specifications of the length measures that fall within this approval. It also states the marking and verification requirements to ensure the measure is complaint with the weights and measures legislation and can be used for trade use.

The below includes an overview of the certificate:

- includes two types:
  - rigid stainless-steel measures up to 1 metre, and
  - flexible tape measures up to 20 metres
- markings must be clear, indelible and easy to read
- made of durable and stable materials that are resistant to environmental influences

For more information, see the draft certificate for the full details:

[Have your say – Length measures in use for trade | Ministry of Business Innovation & Employment \(mbie.govt.nz\)](https://www.mbie.govt.nz/have-your-say-length-measures-in-use-for-trade)

## Potential and / or actual impacts

If the proposal was to be enacted, the below highlights the main changes each identified group may experience.

**Business:** *Those who manufacture, import and / or sell length measures*

- For a type of length measure to be used for trade purposes, it will have to comply with the general certificate of approval before being verified.
- If it doesn't comply, an application for approval will have to be submitted.
- A fee is charged for the assessment and production of an approval certificate for each type of length measure submitted.
- Where a length measure is being sold, it must be clear if it can be used for trade (conforms to a certificate of approval) or not.
- A non-approved measure cannot be advertised as being able to be used for trade until a certificate of approval is issued.

**Business:** *Those who sell goods by reference to length using a length measure*

- Any length measure used for trade purposes must be of a type approved by MBIE.
- Once approved, it must comply with the conditions of approval stated in the certificate of approval before being verified by an Inspector of Weights and Measures or an Accredited Person.
- A length measure that you currently own / use may fall within the scope of the general certificate of approval and would be required to be verified to continue to be used for trade.
- A fee is charged for the verification of a length measure.
- A length measure that you currently own / use that falls outside the scope of the general certificate of approval, and if it does not have its own certificate of approval, it must be removed from trade use and replaced with an approved and verified length measure.

**Consumers:** *Those who buy goods by reference to length where a length measure is used*

- Businesses are more aware of their obligations to comply with the legislation.

- The measurement of the goods is done in an accurate and reliable way, by minimising human and equipment error.
- Confidence as a buyer, and the marketplace, should increase.

**Others:** *Any other people, organisations, agencies etc. not included above*

- We want to hear from anyone who knows of any other potential and / or actual impacts on New Zealanders who have not been identified above.

## Useful links

Due to the nature of this consultation, some words and phrases may not be commonly used or understood. Find below a list of links to pages on our website, which will provide you with more information about the specifics mentioned in this consultation:

- [Trade Measurement \(tradingstandards.govt.nz\)](https://tradingstandards.govt.nz)
- [For accredited persons | Trade Measurement \(tradingstandards.govt.nz\)](https://tradingstandards.govt.nz)
- [Equipment used for weighing and measuring | Trade Measurement \(tradingstandards.govt.nz\)](https://tradingstandards.govt.nz)
- [Glossary | Trade Measurement \(tradingstandards.govt.nz\)](https://tradingstandards.govt.nz)

Please contact [trademeasurement@mbie.govt.nz](mailto:trademeasurement@mbie.govt.nz) if you have any questions or queries on this document or the consultation.

## Timeline

- Consultation opens 23 August 2024
- Consultation closes 20 September 2024
- Process / next steps:
  - Feedback will be assessed and responded to (where appropriate) during October 2024.
  - After this, a decision will be made on whether to proceed or not with the proposals.
  - Updates will be provided via [Have your say | Ministry of Business, Innovation & Employment \(mbie.govt.nz\)](https://mbie.govt.nz) and [News and notices | Trade Measurement \(tradingstandards.govt.nz\)](https://tradingstandards.govt.nz)