

NOMENCLATURE, SYMBOLS, UNITS AND STANDARDS

One of the main functions of the International Union of Pure and Applied Chemistry (IUPAC), carried out through the voluntary help and expertise of the Members of its Commissions, is to propose and get agreement on nomenclature, symbols, units and standards. During recent years, this has become increasingly important, on the one hand because the range of chemistry has widened and it has become more relevant to other scientific fields; and on the other, because the rapid growth of chemistry demands quicker agreement about these matters. Often, Commissions of IUPAC work together with Commissions of other International Scientific Unions in preparing the recommendations. Some minor changes of procedure have now been agreed.

In the past, recommendations of a scientific nature and relating to the establishment of international scientific usage (nomenclature, symbols, standards, etc.) were regarded as 'provisional'. National Adhering Organizations of IUPAC and individual specialists everywhere were asked to comment within eight months so that critical observations could be considered by the Commission or other body concerned. The recommendations, amended as seemed desirable, were then submitted for approval by the Council of IUPAC.

During recent years, the Union has issued the provisional recommendations as 'Appendices on Tentative Nomenclature, Symbols, Units and Standards' to the IUPAC *Information Bulletin*. The final ('definitive') recommendations have been published subsequently in *Pure and Applied Chemistry*, the journal of IUPAC.

The Bureau of IUPAC has now decided that:

- (i) Nomenclature previously issued by IUPAC as 'tentative' shall be termed 'provisional rules X' (X being the year of issue);
- (ii) Symbols and units previously issued by IUPAC as 'tentative' shall be termed 'provisional recommendations X' (X being the year of issue);
- (iii) Nomenclature previously issued by IUPAC as 'definitive' or 'final' shall be termed 'rules approved X' (X being the year of issue);
- (iv) Symbols and units previously issued by IUPAC as 'definitive' or 'final' shall be termed 'recommendations approved X' (X being the year of issue).

The material will be published by IUPAC in the same two places as hitherto, taking into account the above changes of designation.

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President