

MINUTES OF THE FIRST MEETING OF THE RESEARCH COMMITTEE ON MINIMUM STANDARDS OF ACCOMMODATION HELD IN THE BOARD ROOM, C.S.I.R., SECOND FLOOR, BLOCK 1, VISAGIE STREET GOVERNMENT BUILDINGS, PRETORIA, ON THURSDAY 3RD JULY, 1947, AT 10 a.m.

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PRESENT: MR. E.W. DOHSE, Acting Chairman.  
DR. B.F.J. SCHONLAND, President, C.S.I.R.  
MR. J.E. JENNINGS  
MR. P.H. CONNELL  
MAJ. F. RODSETH  
MR. V.T. SCHAEERER  
MAJ. J.C. COLLINGS  
MR. D.M. COWIN  
MR. B.L. BUCHANAN  
DR. F. BRUMMER  
DR. P.J. OLCKERS  
DR. A.J. VAN DER SPUY  
MR. M.G. NICOLSON.

Apologies were received from Mr. Ritchie and Dr. P.A.W. Cooke.

1.(a) Confirmation of Minutes.

Page 10 (c) "Agreed": Mr. Nicolson drew attention to the incorrect spelling of his name and stated that he was not Chairman but Honorary Secretary of the United Municipal Executive. It was decided that the resolution be amended to read as follows: "Agreed that Mr. Nicolson, Honorary Secretary of the United Municipal Executive be invited to represent the Local Authorities and the United Municipal Executive on the Committee".

The minutes were then confirmed.

(b) Matters Arising out of Minutes.

(i) Native Representation: Mr. Jennings reported that this matter had been referred to the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research who would discuss it in detail at their next meeting in three weeks' time.

(ii) Housewife Representation: The Chairman reported that the question of a suitable representative had been discussed by the Building Research Advisory Committee which felt that it would be a wiser course to approach the National Council of Women, on which all women's organisations in the country are represented, than to appoint Mrs. Deneys Reitz in a personal capacity. It was also mentioned that Mrs. Reitz resides in Cape Town, and would not be in a position to attend meetings regularly,

Agreed: that the Committee recommend to the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research, that the National Council of Women be invited to appoint a representative, the invitation to suggest the type of person required. Dr. Schonland then said that he would approach the National Council of Women without delay.

### 2.(a) Election of Chairman.

Mr. Dohse was nominated as Chairman but said that his Departmental Secretary had ruled that he should not take the chair on more committees than those on which he was serving at the moment. He was therefore unable to accept.

The Chairman pointed out that the person who accepted the chairmanship of the Committee would have a great deal of work to cope with, coupled with immense responsibilities. Various nominations were made but in each case the nominee stood down. After some discussion it was agreed that the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research be requested to appoint a chairman, in consultation, if necessary, with the Building Research Advisory Committee.

In view of the delay which might arise, it was further agreed that the Secretary for Public Works be requested to allow Mr. Dohse to act as chairman until a permanent chairman is appointed.

### (b) Appointment of Organising Secretary.

The Chairman suggested that in view of the large amount of work to be covered by the sub-committees, an organising secretary should be appointed who would be responsible for the administration, co-ordination and reporting back to the Main Committee. This item did not appear on the agenda but he thought this was the best stage for its introduction. This was agreed, and the Chairman then suggested that a member of the National Building Research Institute should undertake the work, subject to the President's approval. He suggested Mr. Connell would be a very suitable choice as his normal work was of a very similar character. Dr. Schonland had no objection and it was agreed to appoint Mr. P.H. Connell organising secretary.

### 3. Scope and Planning of Work.

All members of the Committee felt that it was very important to define precisely the scope of the Committee's work, and state clearly its ultimate aims and objects. Mr. Jennings said that the work of the Committee would cover the physiological and psychological problems of housing rather than those of materials and structure. The Committee should first make recommendations for minimum standards of accommodation. The economic aspects of the problem were of secondary importance rather than the main consideration in the work. How the standards arrived at could best be achieved in practice was a matter which could be considered only after these standards had been set up. Dr. van der Spuy said we should not lose sight of the fact that once the standards laid down by this Committee were adopted it might be wrong to enforce them in country districts. The question of whether these standards would be made compulsory was debated at some length.

Dr. Schonland said the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research as such was brought into being to investigate national problems from a scientific point of view i.e. find out facts, make scientific studies, and finally to make recommendations on the facts. In view of this and of the fact that this Committee was formed under the auspices of the

Council for Scientific and Industrial Research, he considered that the Committee had no authority to lay down standards, but could make recommendations for the use of those responsible for the laying down of standards. The drafting of legislation, therefore, was not a function of the Committee.

Mr. Buchanan said that it would then be appropriate for the S.A. Bureau of Standards to use the recommendations of the Committee for the establishment of standards in the form of Codes of Practice.

Dr. Brummer suggested that the Committee would arrive at minimum desirable standards which might not always be practicable immediately. These should be stated as desirable aims for the future. In addition the Committee should postulate a series of practical aims, leading up to the eventual general adoption of the minimum desirable standards.

(a) Definition of Scope.

It was finally agreed that the Committee's terms of reference would read:

"To examine the needs of the population in so far as they affect housing and to make recommendations for minimum conditions of health, comfort and welfare, (if necessary for different regions and different sections of the community in the Union), below which dwellings should not be erected, and to indicate practical objectives for future development in these respects."

(b) Planning.

Mr. Nicolson asked whether recommendations of the Committee were to be restricted to Accommodation or would they also cover structural standards, and whether the Committee would concern itself with material and their costs. The Chairman said that the National Building Research Institute was continually investigating along these lines, and he felt that the Committee should rather concern itself with the principal problem - that of investigating minimum standards of accommodation. It was pointed out, however, that a housing costs sub-committee was suggested in the list circulated to members.

The Committee then accepted the proposals set out in the chart as a Plan of Attack. Dr. Olckers said that it might be of some assistance if the organising secretary could draw up schedules of specific questions for the sub-committees which would form the basis of their work.

4. Election of sub-committees.

It was decided to consider each of the proposed sub-committees in turn, and to discuss the scope of its work at the same time as its proposed membership.

Sub-committee No. 1:"Population needs and family structure sub-committee."(a) Discussion:

There was considerable discussion on the exact meaning of the sub-committee's title. The term "Population needs" was taken to refer to the number of dwellings needed, i.e. the extent, or magnitude of the problem and the distribution of housing need in the country. "Family Structure" would refer to the number of children and their age-distribution in the various social groups in the community.

Major Collings suggested that the sub-committee should study the Union's population trends and movements and the structure of families. Mr. Nicolson felt that the statistical study of the housing needs of the population should not be neglected. A discussion as to whether statistics should or should not be the concern of the sub-committee followed, from which the conclusion emerged that the sub-committee would not be required to make surveys of housing needs (i.e. gather statistics on housing shortages) but that it could only examine evidence submitted by various ad hoc bodies of researchers, and collect therefrom only such evidence as it may need to elucidate its own problems. It would then prepare a report for the Main Committee. This was agreed.

The suggestion was then made that this sub-committee should consider the question of family economics in relation to minimum standards of accommodation. The Committee felt that whilst this aspect was of great importance, care must be taken not to allow economic considerations to influence the setting up of minimum standards. The question was then asked as to whether the cost of housing would be studied. This matter was held over for consideration lower down under "sub-committee No. 10".

(b) Title.

It was agreed that the title of sub-committee No. 1 be amended to read: "Sub-committee on Social Trends, Population Needs, Family Structure and Family Economics".

(c) Membership.

It was agreed that the following be represented on sub-committee No. 1:

Department of Social Welfare.  
National Housing and Planning Commission.  
National Council for Social Research.  
Department of Native Affairs.  
National Council of Women.  
National Council for Child Welfare.

Sub-Committee No. 2:"Survey of Existing Legislation".(a) Discussion:

In general the title proposed and the scope of work suggested therein were agreed to. Dr. Brummer pointed out that much valuable information would be placed at the Committee's disposal if the sub-committee were to include in

its / .....

its study related legislation in countries outside the Union.

(b) Title:

It was agreed that the title of sub-committee No. 2 be amended to read: "Sub-committee to survey existing legislation in South Africa and relevant legislation in other countries."

(c) Membership:

It was agreed that the following be represented on sub-committee No. 2:

S.A. Bureau of Standards.  
Department of Public Health.  
United Municipal Executive.

Sub-Committee No. 3:

"Survey of housing attitudes in existing estates"

(a) Discussion:

An explanation of the term "housing attitudes" was asked for. It was pointed out that the term was in use in the United States of America to describe the attitude of the householder to his home and its surroundings. Dr. Brummer questioned whether the survey should be limited to housing estates and suggested that it be broadened to include all classes of housing accommodation. Major Rodseth suggested that the attitude of occupants towards the question of home-ownership should be studied. Mr. Jennings explained that a preliminary survey along these lines known as the "Housing Requirements Investigation" had been started by the Architectural Division of the National Building Research Institute, and that the work of sub-committee No. 3 would be closely connected with this investigation.

(b) Title:

It was agreed that the title of sub-committee No. 3 be amended to read: "Sub-Committee to survey the attitudes of occupants towards existing housing".

(c) Membership:

It was agreed that the following be asked to nominate representatives to serve on Sub-committee No. 3:

United Municipal Executive  
Department of Native Affairs  
Department of Social Welfare  
National Council of Women  
National Building Research Institute.

Sub-committee No. 4:

"Amenities and Estate Planning (Land Use) Sub-Committee"

(a) Discussion:

Mr. Cowin stressed that in any consideration of Estate Planning the question of population density in relation to housing should be carefully studied. After some

discussion / .....

discussion on this point it was agreed that a consideration of this matter would form part of the work of this sub-committee. It was further suggested that as the amenities of housing estates are an integral part of the planning problems, the term "Amenities" in the title was redundant.

(b) Title:

It was agreed that the title of sub-committee No. 4 be amended to read "Estate Planning Sub-Committee".

(c) Membership:

Mr. Cowin proposed that the words "Town Planning Institute" be substituted for "Town and Country Planning Association". This was agreed.

It was agreed that the following be asked to nominate representatives to serve on Sub-committee No. 4:

National Housing and Planning Commission  
Institute of South African Architects  
Town Planning Institute  
United Municipal Executive  
National Council for Social Research.

Sub-committee No. 5:

"Ventilation Sub-Committee."

(a) Discussion:

The sub-committee's organisation was agreed to as it stood.

(b) Title:

It was agreed that the title should read "Ventilation Sub-Committee"

(c) Membership:

It was agreed that the following should be asked to nominate representatives to serve on Sub-committee No. 5:

National Building Research Institute  
Department of Public Health  
Institute of S.A. Architects.

Sub-Committee No. 6:

"Lighting Sub-Committee."

(a) Discussion:

It was suggested that it should be made clear that the sub-committee would investigate both natural and artificial lighting. This was agreed.

(b) Title:

It was agreed that the title of sub-committee No. 6 be amended to read "Sub-Committee on Natural and Artificial Lighting".

(c) Scope / .....

(c) Scope.

The Committee will examine the existing legislation defining the minimum standards of natural and artificial lighting permitted in dwellings, and will report on the suitability of such criteria as exist at present. It will collect evidence on studies made and methods adopted in the Union and elsewhere to find ways of improving the level and quality of natural and artificial lighting in dwellings, and make suggestions for improving the design and placing of windows and lighting fixtures so as to achieve this end.

(d) Membership:

It was agreed that the following be asked to nominate representatives to serve on sub-committee No. 6:

National Physical Laboratory  
National Building Research Institute  
Department of Public Health  
Institute of S.A. Architects.

Sub-committee No. 7:

"Heating and Cooling Sub-Committee".

(a) Discussion:

The organisation and scope of this sub-committee was accepted as it stood.

(b) Title:

It was agreed that the title of sub-committee No. 7 should read "Heating and Cooling Sub-committee".

(c) Membership:

It was agreed that the following be asked to nominate representatives to serve on sub-committee No. 7:

National Physical Laboratory  
National Building Research Institute  
Department of Public Health  
Institute of S.A. Architects.

Sub-committee No. 8:

"Noise sub-committee".

(a) Discussion:

Mr. Nicolson suggested that smells and other nuisances should be considered by this sub-committee. It was decided however that these problems would be considered by sub-committee No. 9. The sub-committee on Noise was then accepted as it stood.

(b) Title:

It was agreed the title of sub-committee No. 8 should read: "Noise sub-committee".

(c) Membership / .....

(c) Membership:

It was agreed that the following be asked to nominate representatives to serve on sub-committee No. 8.

National Physical Laboratory  
National Building Research Institute  
Department of Public Health  
Institute of Architects.

Sub-committee No. 9:"Planning and Design sub-committee".(a) Discussion:

There was some discussion on the organisation of this sub-committee. The relation, the type, size and quantity of furniture to the minimum desirable size and shape of rooms was realised to be of considerable importance. It was thought therefore that the work of the proposed Furniture sub-committee (No. 11) should be incorporated in that of this sub-committee. Mr. Cowin suggested that to furniture should be added fittings, and Mr. Connell proposed the inclusion of household equipment. This was agreed. The Chairman pointed out that should the investigation on these components prove to be extensive the sub-committee could form a sub-group at a later stage, on which industrial design and furniture industry representatives could be invited to serve. The Committee was reminded that the question of smells and other nuisances should be considered by this sub-committee, and it was suggested that the question of household accidents arising out of inadequate standards of accommodation or bad design should also be looked into. These suggestions were agreed to.

(b) Title.

It was agreed that the title of sub-committee No. 9 be amended to read "Sub-committee on House Planning and Design (including Furniture, Fittings and Equipment)".

(c) Membership.

It was agreed that the following be asked to nominate representatives on sub-committee No. 9:

Institute of S.A. Architects  
National Housing and Planning Commission  
National Building Research Institute  
Department of Public Health  
National Council of Women  
National Council for Child Welfare  
United Municipal Executive.

It was further agreed that the sub-committee should co-opt representatives of the Department of Native Affairs and of the major local authorities when dealing with house planning and design for non-Europeans.

Sub-committee No. 10 / ...



Sub-committee No. 10:"Housing Costs Sub-committee".(a) Discussion:

It was again emphasised that the question of costs should not be allowed to influence the laying down of desirable minimum standards. It was pointed out that a study of housing costs would involve a major investigation, requiring a parallel organisation.

Dr. Brummer said however that all the sub-committees would have to consider incidentally the matter of costs in making their recommendations. At a later stage an ad-hoc committee to study the cost implications of the recommended minimum standards could be formed.

In the meantime it was agreed that a special sub-committee to study costs was not warranted, and that whatever study of costs in relation to the family budget was thought to be necessary should be undertaken by Sub-committee No. 1.

Sub-committee No. 11."Furniture sub-committee".

It was agreed that the formation of this sub-committee was not warranted and that its work should be undertaken by sub-committee No. 9.

Sub-committee No. 12:"Family Economics Sub-committee"

It was agreed that the formation of sub-committee was not warranted and that its work should be undertaken by sub-committee No. 1.

Sub-committees: General.1. Representation on sub-committees:

It was agreed that the bodies represented on the Main Committee should be free to nominate for service on the sub-committees members other than those serving on the main committee.

2. Co-option of Additional Members:

It was agreed to empower sub-committees to co-opt any number of additional members from other organisations or from any source whatever, should this be considered necessary. It was agreed that corresponding members be appointed when necessary.

3. Terms of Reference:

Dr. Brummer suggested that the Terms of Reference of each of the sub-committees should be specified at the first meetings of the sub-committees and reported back to the Main Committee at its next meeting. This was agreed.

## 4. Duties / .....

#### 4. Duties of the Organising Secretary.

It was agreed that the Organising Secretary would be responsible for the organisation and co-ordination of the work as a whole, arrange time and place of all meetings, keep and circulate minutes and notices to Members, find ways and means of reporting back the findings of sub-committees to the Main Committee, and keep records of correspondence. The clerical work involved would be undertaken by the National Building Research Institute.

#### General.

##### Title of Committee:

After some discussion it was agreed that the name of the Committee should be amended to read "Research Committee on Minimum Standards of Accommodation".

##### Administration of Building Research Advisory Committee.

The Chairman said that the President, who had unfortunately to leave the meeting early on urgent business, had asked that the Committee should regard itself as a sub-committee of the Building Research Advisory Committee. This request was made for administrative reasons arising from the fact that the Building Research Advisory Committee was the body which directs the work of the National Building Research Institute. The request was agreed to by the Committee.

##### Frequency of Meetings.

It was suggested that the Main Committee would be unlikely to meet more often than once in two months, at any rate in the early stages of the investigation. Sub-committees would meet every month.

##### Next Meeting.

The next meeting of the Main Committee would be held after the inaugural meetings of the nine sub-committees, probably in about three months' time.

The meeting terminated at 12.30 p.m.

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# RESEARCH COMMITTEE ON MINIMUM STANDARDS OF ACCOMMODATION.

SUB-COMMITTEE ON SOCIAL TRENDS, POPULATION NEEDS, FAMILY STRUCTURE & FAMILY ECONOMICS.

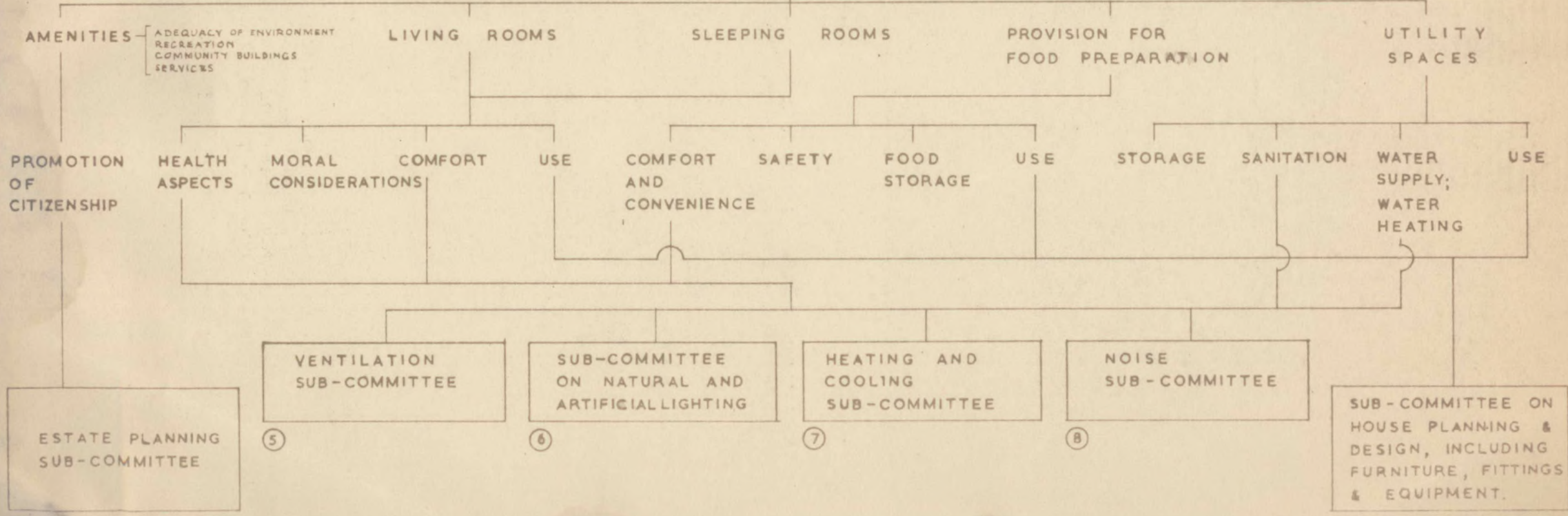
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SUB-COMMITTEE TO SURVEY EXISTING LEGISLATION IN SOUTH AFRICA, AND RELEVANT LEGISLATION IN OTHER COUNTRIES.

②

SUB-COMMITTEE TO SURVEY THE ATTITUDE OF OCCUPANTS TO EXISTING HOUSING.

③



ADDENDUM TO MINUTES OF THE FIRST MEETING OF THE RESEARCH COMMITTEE ON MINIMUM STANDARDS OF ACCOMMODATION, HELD ON 3RD JULY 1947.

Amended List of Sub-Committees.

No.	Name.	Membership.
1	Sub-committee on Social Trends, Population Needs, Family Structure and Family Economics.	Department of Social Welfare. National Housing and Planning Commission. National Council for Social Research. Department of Native Affairs. National Council of Women. National Council for Child Welfare.
2	Sub-committee to survey existing legislation in South Africa and relevant legislation in other countries.	S.A. Bureau of Standards. Department of Public Health. United Municipal Executive.
3	Sub-committee to survey the attitudes of occupants towards existing Housing.	United Municipal Executive. Department of Native Affairs. Department of Social Welfare. National Council of Women. National Building Research Institute.
4	Estate Planning Sub-committee.	National Housing and Planning Commission. Institute of South African Architects. Town Planning Institute. United Municipal Executive. National Council for Social Research.
5	Ventilation Sub-committee	National Building Research Institute. Department of Public Health. Institute of South African Architects.
6	Sub-committee on Natural and Artificial Lighting.	National Physical Laboratory National Building Research Institute. Department of Public Health. Institute of South African Architects.
7	Heating and Cooling Sub-committee.	National Physical Laboratory. National Building Research Institute. Department of Public Health Institute of South African Architects.
8	Noise Sub-committee	National Physical Laboratory. National Building Research Institute. Department of Public Health. Institute of South African Architects.

No.	Name.	Membership.
9	Sub-committee on House Planning and Design (Including Furniture, Fittings and Equipment).	Institute of South African Architects. National Housing and Planning Commission. National Building Research Institute. Department of Public Health. National Council of Women. National Council for Child Welfare. United Municipal Executive.

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