

RESEARCH COMMITTEE ON MINIMUM STANDARDS OF ACCOMMODATION.Sub-Committee No. 5 (Ventilation).

Minutes of the First Meeting held in the Board Room, Council for Scientific and Industrial Research, Second Floor, Block 1, Visagie Street Government Buildings, Pretoria, on Wednesday, 24th September, 1947 at 2.15 p.m.

Present:

Dr. A.J.A. Roux (Chairman) (National Building Research Institute)  
 Mr. P.H. Connell (Organising Secretary) (National Building Research Institute)  
 Dr. R.E. Meaker (Department of Health)  
 Mr. B.L. Buchanan (S.A. Bureau of Standards)  
 Mr. G. McIntosh (Institute of S.A. Architects)

In Attendance:

Miss S. de Beer (National Building Research Institute).

Convening of Meeting.

The Organising Secretary convened the meeting and welcomed the members on behalf of the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research. Mr. McIntosh stated that the Institute of Architects had not as yet appointed their official representative to this Committee but that he would represent the Institute until the appointment of a permanent representative.

Mr. Connell told the meeting that Dr. Roux had been nominated as Chairman, and asked Dr. Roux to take the Chair.

Dr. Roux then called upon the Organising Secretary to give an introductory statement.

Introductory Statement.

Mr. Connell gave the Committee a brief history of the setting up of the Research Committee on Minimum Standards of Accommodation. It was common knowledge that the regulations of different local authorities were notoriously at variance, even in regard to fundamental necessities of housing and it was generally felt that much of the legislation governing standards of housing accommodation was arbitrary and out of date. In a number of countries research had been carried out into minimum standards of accommodation, and such research had always resulted in better housing, governed by improved legislation. The National Building Research Institute in common with many similar organisations elsewhere had felt that in South Africa too there was a great deal of room for improvement in housing accommodation standards. To begin with, some definition of the needs of the people to be housed was necessary. In South Africa, with its wide range of climatic conditions and its mixed population the needs to be met by housing differ greatly, and it was desirable therefore that a scientific study of the problem as a whole should be undertaken. A start was made by setting up a



research programme in the form of a survey of housing requirements from the users' point of view.

This survey had just been started when the National Housing and Planning Commission requested the National Building Research Institute to examine and report on a schedule of tentative standards of accommodation which it was proposed to apply to all housing schemes for which state loans were to be advanced. In this schedule, minimum standards and certain maximum standards were laid down, in an effort to improve on the existing standards which applied hitherto. To carry out this work, the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research set up a special Research Committee to direct and co-ordinate research into the whole question of minimum standards of housing accommodation and to prepare a report on the National Housing and Planning Commission Standards. This report would be issued in June, 1948 and would inevitably be in the nature of an interim statement. Thereafter, the Committee's work take on a more long-range character and undertake fundamental research into housing standards.

The Organising Secretary then gave the names of the various organisations which were included in the Main Committee. The Main Committee would be responsible for bringing out final recommendations, but the work of collecting information would be done by nine working sub-committees. The organisation of the Committees and of the research programme was then described to members as outlined on the attached chart. Mr. Connell stressed that the object of the whole study was to bring about a better housing environment, both in town and country, and that every aspect of the housing environment would come under review and analysis.

The task of the Sub-Committee on Ventilation was outlined in the Draft Terms of Reference which were tabled at this stage.

#### Draft Terms of Reference.

The Chairman thanked Mr. Connell for his Introductory Statement and proceeded to read the Draft Terms of Reference which were then discussed by the Sub-Committee.

Dr. Meaker suggested that the words "to a reasonable degree" might well be omitted, but on further discussion it was decided that these should remain in the Terms of Reference.

Mr. Buchanan suggested that it should be made clear that this was a research sub-committee and not concerned with the actual drawing up of codes, which would overlap with the work of the Bureau of Standards.

It was pointed out that for the present an arrangement had been made under which Sub-Committees Nos. 5, 6, 7 and 8 would be considered as joint committees serving the interests both of the Bureau of Standards Building Regulations and Codes Committee and the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research Research Committee on Minimum Standards of Accommodation.

Mr. Buchanan suggested that the words "to outline those fields in which further research may be necessary" should be inserted in the Terms of Reference, and after some discussion it was suggested by the Chairman that the Organising Secretary refer this point back to the Main Committee.

Discussion/.....



Discussion took place on the phrase "to study the effects of various climatic conditions on the ventilation of dwellings" regarding its exact meaning, and the best methods of tackling this particular problem. It was agreed that the Meteorological Department should be asked for any relevant data.

It was agreed finally that the Terms of Reference should read as follows, with one suggested amendment:

"To investigate the minimum ventilation standards necessary to maintain health and a reasonable degree of comfort in dwellings in the various regions of South Africa; to study the effects of various climatic conditions on the ventilation of dwellings; to examine the conventional methods of providing ventilation in the various classes of dwelling; to discover where these may be considered to be of too low a standard; to make recommendations as to the methods of improving the ventilation of dwellings; to outline those fields in which further research may be necessary, and to prepare a report on the Sub-Committee's findings for submission to the Main Committee".

#### Methods of Work.

It was felt that the first step was to review all existing legislation covering the ventilation of dwellings. This would be done by Sub-Committee No. 2, but to save time it was decided that the Ventilation Sub-Committee would abstract the available South African Legislation in so far as it affected ventilation. The second step would be to study what research was being done in advance of existing legislation. Summing up, the Chairman said the Sub-Committee must first study the actual position today here and overseas, as regards legislation and research in ventilation problems. Only after these steps had been taken could the Sub-Committee consider the direct attack on South Africa's problems.

#### Allocation of Work.

Dr. Meaker agreed to investigate the legislation regarding ventilation, both Union and overseas (particularly in Britain) and Mr. McIntosh agreed to assist him, particularly in regard to local Municipal bye-laws.

The National Building Research Institute would also study the present position in the Union, Britain and the U.S.A. from such information as it had in its possession.

Mr. Buchanan offered to enlist the co-operation of the Bureau of Standards as regards bye-laws and codes.

#### General.

The Chairman pointed out that the Committee was at liberty to co-opt any further members. After discussion, it was decided to leave the question of co-option over for the time being.

The question of correlation between the various sub-committees was discussed. It was felt to be obvious that some fusion must take place, for example, between the Ventilation Sub-Committee and the Heating and Cooling Sub-Committee. This would probably come about naturally at a later date.

Dr./.....



Dr. Meaker said that he felt his Department had a vital interest in the work of Sub-Committees Nos. 9 and 4, and suggested that it should be invited to appoint representatives thereon. The Chairman welcomed the suggestion, saying that the more vitally interested bodies were represented on the sub-committees, the better would be the chances of success. It was decided that the Organising Secretary should send copies of the draft Terms of Reference of the two sub-committees to the Secretary for Health, and ask if he would like to appoint representatives. This was agreed to.

The date for the next meeting was fixed for Tuesday, 4th November, 1947 at 2.30 p.m. in the C.S.I.R. Board Room.

The meeting ended at 3.40 p.m.

Confirmed.

CHAIRMAN.



# RESEARCH COMMITTEE ON MINIMUM STANDARDS OF ACCOMMODATION.

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

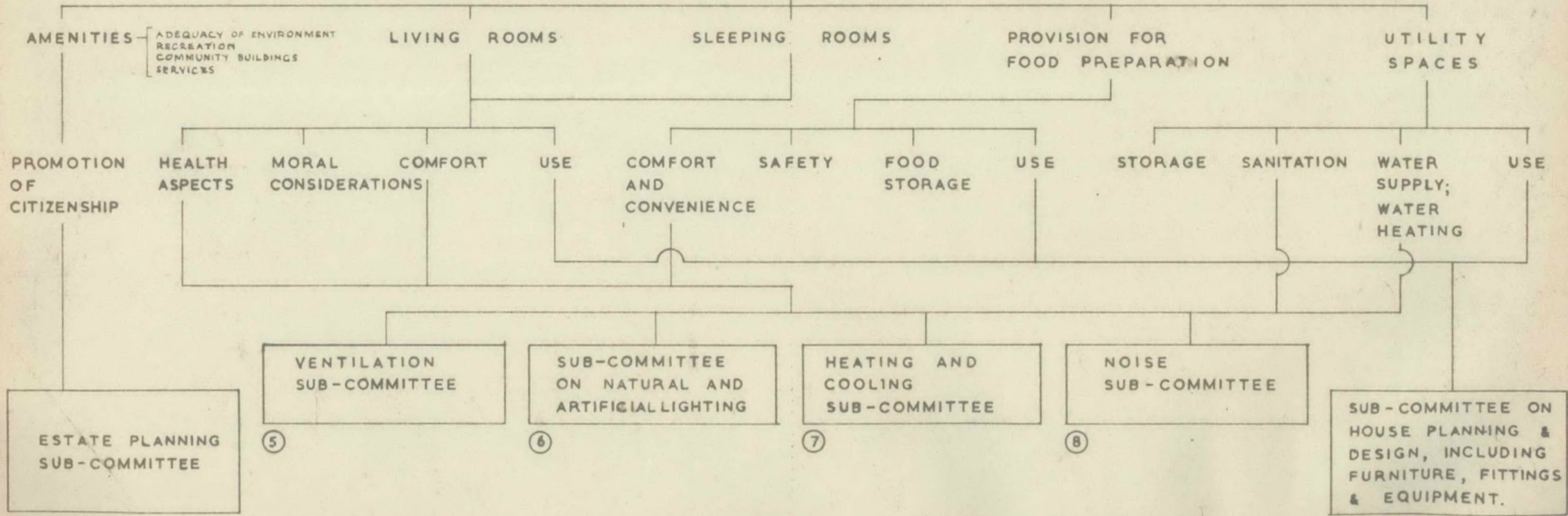
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SUB-COMMITTEE TO SURVEY EXISTING LEGISLATION IN SOUTH AFRICA, AND RELEVANT LEGISLATION IN OTHER COUNTRIES.

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

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