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Choosing Performance and Serviceability Measures for Standardization

REFERENCE: Walker, Warren L., "Serviceability Measures for Standardization: Individual Occupants", *ASTM STP 1029, Performance of Buildings and Serviceability of Facilities*, Gerald Davis and Francis T. Ventre, eds., American Society for Testing and Materials, Philadelphia, 1990.

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Priorities for the standardization of performance measures should take into account the concerns of organizations that design, construct, and manage large numbers of buildings. As a facilities program manager at the United States Postal Service, I have been involved with their facility research and evaluation program. Although USPS spends approximately \$800 million per year on facilities, relatively little is spent on performance evaluations. This is not unlike similar organizations. The reasons for this should be considered when choosing performance measures for standardization.

Some facility managers regard facility evaluation findings as too subjective, especially when they emphasize behavioral over functional or technical issues. Cost effectiveness is the prime concern of most facility organizations, yet this is the weakest part of most evaluation efforts. A systems approach to selecting evaluation measure categories might give more balance. Researchers have tried to identify other ways to make evaluation programs more acceptable (Farbstein, et al.)². Suggestions include making certain evaluations result in tangible products, such as design guides, action plans, cost projections, and policy changes. It is also important to recognize the need for clearly defined evaluation 'levels'. It is not possible for organizations with many facilities to conduct intensive evaluations on all buildings. Evaluation measures chosen for standardization should complement defined levels of evaluation so that organizational resources can be applied efficiently.

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2 Farbstein, Jay & Associates and Min Kantrowitz and Associates, "POE and Organizational Development", IAPS 10, 1988