



*directing council*

PAN AMERICAN  
SANITARY  
ORGANIZATION

X Meeting

*regional committee*

WORLD  
HEALTH  
ORGANIZATION

IX Meeting



Washington, D. C.  
September 1957

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Topic 23: PROGRESS REPORT ON SANITARY REGULATIONS FOR HOTELS AND RESTAURANTS

Background

The above topic was placed on the agenda of the IX Meeting of the Directing Council at the proposal of the Government of Costa Rica, which recognized that the study of sanitary regulations for hotels and restaurants with a special view to the health protection of international travellers is, in fact, only one phase of the general environmental sanitation problems of the various countries. However, without neglecting the over-all activities of sanitation, to which attention is given in the programs of the governments and in the collaboration rendered by the Organization, the need has been stressed to devote special attention to this specific phase.

In connection with this topic, the Director presented at that meeting of the Directing Council a preliminary report on the Bureau's participation in the formulation of standards of sanitation applicable to hotels, restaurants, and similar facilities, undertaken as the result of the request presented, through the Organization of American States, by the Sixth Inter-American Travel Congress (San José, Costa Rica, April 1956). In a special resolution on "Minimum Sanitation Standards for Tourist Accommodations (Resolution XXXI), that Congress requested the OAS to invite the Pan American Sanitary Bureau to appoint a technical committee, composed of experts in this field and representatives of the Inter-American Travel Congresses, to prepare a set of minimum sanitation standards applicable to tourist accommodations.

The Directing Council, after reiterating the importance of the problem of sanitation in the countries of the Hemisphere and the need for improving the measures applied for the protection of the population, and after noting the Director's report on the action taken at the request of the OAS in appointing the Technical Committee of Experts, resolved (Resolution XVI):

"1. To approve the action taken by the Director of the Bureau.

2. To request the Technical Committee of Experts appointed by the Director to prepare a manual of recommended minimum standards of sanitation in hotels, restaurants, transportation and other tourist and travel facilities, for consideration by the Directing Council.

3. To request the Technical Committee of Experts, in preparing the manual, to take into account any recommendations that may be made by the Joint ICAO/WHO Committee on the Hygiene and Sanitation of Airports.

4. To request the Director to submit a progress report to the Directing Council at its next meeting."

The Director accordingly has the honor to present the following report on the work of the Technical Committee of Experts.

#### Report

The membership of the Technical Committee has been expanded to include the following experts:

Mr. Francisco Hernández, Chief, Travel Division, Pan American Union, Washington, D. C.

Mr. Malcolm C. Hope, Chief, Sanitary Engineering Division, U. S. Public Health Service, Department of Health, Education and Welfare, Washington, D. C.

Mr. Elmer Jenkins, Director, National Touring Department, American Automobile Association, Washington, D. C.

Mr. H. H. Kelly, Director, International Travel Division, Office of Trade Promotion, U. S. Department of Commerce, Washington, D.C. (Representative designated by the Permanent Executive Committee of the Inter-American Travel Congresses).

Mr. W. C. LaBaugh, Director of Engineering, International Road Federation, Washington, D. C.

Mr. Luis Mantilla F., Chief, Sanitary Engineering Department, Ministry of Public Health and Welfare of Peru, and Dean of the Sanitary Engineering School, National University of Engineering, Lima, Peru.

- Mr. Humberto Olivero, Consultant Engineer of the Ministry of Public Health and Welfare of Guatemala, and Civil Engineer of the University of Guatemala, Guatemala.
- Mr. John A. Paine, Superintendent of Facilitation System, Pan American World Airways, New York, N. Y.
- Mr. George O. Pierce, Chief, Environmental Sanitation Branch, Pan American Sanitary Bureau, WHO Regional Office for the Americas, Washington, D. C.
- Mr. Guillermo Rodríguez, Professor of Sanitary Engineering, National University of Panama, Panama.
- Mr. Joaquín Segura Gutiérrez, Director General of Sanitary Engineering, Ministry of Public Health and Welfare, Mexico, D. F., Mexico.

(The Committee is also to include an expert from Costa Rica, who is still to be selected.)

The Committee held its first full session in Washington on 23 April 1957, at which time it made a complete study of the task assigned to it and drew up a program of work. The following permanent officers were selected: Chairman, Mr. Humberto Olivero; Vice-Chairman, Mr. Malcolm C. Hope; Secretary, Mr. George O. Pierce.

Prior to this meeting, a paper entitled "Plans for Establishing Minimum Standards of Sanitation for Tourist Accommodations in the Americas" was presented by the Secretary of the Committee, on 11 April 1957, at the Fifteenth Annual Meeting of the U. S.-Mexico Border Public Health Association, to point out the importance attached to this problem by the PASO and describe the plans for the proposed manual.

A report outlining the Committee's work plans was also presented, on 13 May, to the Third Meeting of the Permanent Executive Committee of the Inter-American Travel Congresses (Organization of American States), which expressed satisfaction at the progress being made.

In accordance with the work program agreed upon by the Technical Committee, a questionnaire was prepared and sent to the national health service of each Member Government in July 1957, requesting information concerning sanitation standards and practices in their respective countries relating to hotels, restaurants, and other places serving the travelling public. This information will be used by the Committee in determining the final contents of the manual. Up to the date of this report (28 August), three countries (Dominican Republic, Mexico, and Nicaragua) had returned completed questionnaires.

During the period 4-8 August 1957, the Technical Committee held a second meeting in Panama, in conjunction with the Seventh Pan American Highway Congress. At this meeting the Committee developed a tentative outline for the contents of the manual, the broad headings of which are as follows:

Preface and Introduction

Chapter I. Water Supply

- II. Plumbing Standards
- III. Sewage Disposal
- IV. Excreta Disposal
- V. Insect and Rodent Control
- VI. Food Sanitation
- VII. Refuse Sanitation
- VIII. Swimming Facilities
- IX. General:

- A. Prevention of fire and accident hazards
- B. Site selection, building construction, and facilities for cleanliness
- C. Miscellaneous

Appendix: Self-inspection check-sheet.

The detailed subdivisions under each of these headings were discussed quite thoroughly and tentative agreement was reached concerning the scope of each chapter. Members of the Committee were designated to prepare drafts of the various portions of the manual, for transmittal to the Secretary by 1 December 1957. These drafts will be translated into English or Spanish, as the case may be, assembled and edited, and resubmitted to the Committee for review and comment.

A meeting is tentatively scheduled for the end of May 1958 in San Juan, Puerto Rico, following the Sixth Inter-American Congress of Sanitary Engineering. At that time it is expected that a draft version of the entire manual will be available for review by the Technical Committee.

Following the Technical Committee's meeting in August, an informational statement was also made to the Seventh Pan American Highway Congress concerning the work of the Committee, its relationship to the use of the Highway, and the assistance available through the Pan American Sanitary Bureau and through the national health services of the Member Countries in connection with any health problems, including those that might arise along the Highway.