

## **New BOMA Measurement Standards Fill Gaps in Commercial Real Estate**

*By William B. Tracy, MBA, NCARB*

*Vice Chair, BOMA Standard Method of Measurement of Measurement Committee*

Some years ago, BOMA International realized that its *Standard Method of Measuring Floor Area in Office Buildings*, originally introduced in 1915, had made “The BOMA Standard” the most widely recognized brand for commercial space measurement in the United States and many other countries. The trouble was that it addressed only office buildings, not other building types such as warehouses, retail space, apartments or condominiums. To better serve the commercial real estate industry, there was an obvious need to develop additional measurement standards that addressed measurement practices that are unique to other those other building types.

In addition to updating the BOMA Office Standard, BOMA International has now published measurement standards for the gross areas of a building, industrial buildings, multi-unit residential buildings and retail buildings. All are now listed as ANSI consensus standards by the American National Standards Institute.

The BOMA *Gross Areas of a Building: Methods of Measurement* is an important tool for property managers. It may be the best way to describe the area of a building that is leased to a single tenant, as in a build-to-suit or a sale-leaseback. It is also a foundation for the new retail and multi-unit residential standards. It offers two measurement methods, Construction Gross Area and Exterior Gross Area. The former encompasses all building areas including balconies, roof terraces and other unenclosed areas. Exterior Gross Area encompasses only fully enclosed space. This standard is also known by the designation ANSI/BOMA Z65.3 – 2009.

The BOMA *Industrial Buildings: Methods of Measurement* is focused on warehouses, distribution centers and the like (including “flex-space” developments). This standard was a collaboration of BOMA and SIOR, was first released in 2004 and is currently being updated. It also offers two measurement methods, an Exterior Wall method and a Drip Line method. The latter Method is common in warmer climates. It is also known by the designation ANSI/BOMA Z65.2 – 2009.

The BOMA *Multi-Unit Residential Buildings: Methods of Measurement* addresses the floor areas of apartments and condominiums. These are often important elements in mixed-use developments. This standard was produced by BOMA, IREM (Institute of Real Estate Management), NAHB (National Association of Home Builders) and NMHC (National Multi-Housing Council). It measures both the living units and the common areas of residential buildings containing four or more living units. It offers two measurement methods: Unit Net Area and Unit Gross Area and carries the designation ANSI/BOMA Z65.4-2010.

The BOMA *Retail Buildings: Methods of Measurement* focuses on shopping centers, strip malls, big box retail buildings and the like. These are also important components of mixed-use development for which there has been no written measurement standard. This standard offers only one measurement method called Gross Leasable Area (GLA) and is very different than the

Store Area method described in the 1996 BOMA Standard. It is also known as ANSI/BOMA Z65.5 – 2010.

All these new standards incorporate the same great features employed by the new 2010 BOMA Office standard to increase clarity and ease of use. They are distributed in electronic format, downloaded from the BOMA store, and can be viewed on your computer or printed out. They include many full-color illustrations and definitions with extensive discussion. Where a defined term is used in the text, it is hyperlinked to its definition. The illustrations are likewise linked to places in the text where they are referenced. All this makes applying these standards as easy and unambiguous as possible.

All BOMA Standard are coordinated with the BOMA *Gross Areas of a Building: Methods of Measurement*. In addition, BOMA task groups are currently developing a new measurement standard for mixed-use buildings and another one addressing multiple buildings in a campus setting. In this way, retail property managers now or will have a coordinated set of space measurement tools that meet their needs for the entire spectrum of square footage data employed in the design, construction, financing, purchase, sale, management and leasing of commercial properties.

To obtain the new BOMA Standards, open your browser, key in [www.BOMA.org](http://www.BOMA.org) and click on the BOMA Store. You can purchase a single license or multiple licenses depending upon your needs. You might consider purchasing one of the cost-saving multi-standard packages as well.

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