Session 1:
CHAIRMAN'S INTRODUCTION

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In his introduction Brian Roden posed the question: who should standardise vocabulary? He introduced the idea that term banks should consist of agreed terminology and that the source of that agreement should be a committee of the British Standards Institution. He pointed out that the writing of standards in the UK is a democratic process involving consensus agreement among manufacturers, users, distributors, local authorities, regulatory bodies etc.

It is clear that people who need standards are the users - a consumer needs a standard for an electric kettle to be assured of its safety and performance; the kettle manufacturer needs a standard for connectors so that he can obtain components, again assured dimensionally and for performance, from a number of suppliers; the connector manufacturer needs a standard for the plastics .... etc etc.

The people who know most about the preparation of standards are the manufacturers. So is identified the beginning of a dilemma - the people who need a standard cannot create it, and those who can create it may not want it. One of the difficulties in committees is obtaining informed comment from users, and BSI always welcomes more user participation, both in its committees and in formal comment on drafts when they are publicly related.

The general principles apply to terminology as well as to standards for material items, and he posed some further questions: Is the terminology work necessary? Who will benefit and by how much? Does the information already exist? Who should standardise? His answer: you should, through participation in a BSI Committee.