The paper describes the conceptual basis for measuring the output of non-market collective services through the use of direct output volume indicators. The case for combining individual activity indicators through cost weights and alternatives is discussed. The paper argues that the current international standard for measuring the volume output of collective services should be amended. The current standard is that direct output measures should be used, but practical measurement issues dictate that input measures must be used as a second best. The paper puts a case for the input approach on conceptual grounds alone.