ICSM NEWS - June 2003

ICSM held its first meeting for the year 2003 in Darwin, Northern Territory, on 29 and 30 May 2003.

Need to Know What Topographic Maps Exist in Australia?

Soon you will be able to find out from the ICSM web site www.icsm.gov.au. ICSM in collaboration with Geoscience Australia are in the process of building a National Topographic Map Index – one stop shop for what's been mapped topographically. Users can search by geographic name or region and find out what topographic maps exist over their area of interest. Topographic map scales to be included in this system will range from 1:1 million up to the 1:25,000 scale. Custodian and information on who to contact in order to get a copy of the map you're interested in, will also be available as part of this index.

Australian & New Zealand Topographic Databases

ICSM's Special Interest Group (SIG) working on *Object Oriented Database Environment for Topographic Data* met again in May 03. Main topics of discussion were: feature attribute domains; national feature codes; strategies and by-products from jurisdictional topographic databases; and the need for a standardised topographic symbology library.

The main outcomes of the meeting included:

- recognising the need for establishing a high level set of feature attribute domains that all jurisdictions could map to and is consistent with ICSM's Harmonised Data Model;

- a need for a *National Feature Code* list that maintains a three tier hierarchical structure;

- a need for a national standardised topographic symbology library to complement the HDM, which the SIG will undertaken as an additional task;

- similarities in identified by-products expected to be produced from jurisdictional topographic databases; and

- realisation that all jurisdictional topographic data models (ie. databases) regardless of the inherent differences can be mapped to the ICSM HDM, therefore mapped to one another as well.

A follow up meeting is planned for late 2003 – early 2004.

PCTMSL Achievements Over the last 20 Years!

The Permanent Committee on Tides and Mean Sea Level (PCTMSL) was created in 1979 by resolution of then the National Mapping Council (now ICSM). The initial aims of PCTMSL were to:

1. establish a database of digitised tidal observations;
2. establish a catalogue of available tide gauge records;
3. establish a data base of tidal harmonic constants;
4. consider the most appropriate media and formats for the storage and exchange of the above data;
5. investigate the quality of existing tide gauges and their records;
6. obtain tidal records from all Council members and other cooperating authorities; and
7. recommend other relevant activities which may be in the national interest.

By 2000, PCTMSL has managed to complete and/or address all these tasks, as well as provide a forum for exchange of information concerning recording and predicting tidal heights and provide a panel of experts in tidal matters for Australia and New Zealand. How these tasks were achieved are summarised in report titled *Achievements of the PCTMSL* to be published on the ICSM web site www.icsm.gov.au in next coming months.

auDA Agree to Reserve Significant Geographic Names for Community Use!

Domain Administration Ltd (auDA) are the prime body responsible in regulating and setting policy on the registration of Australian *.com* and *.net* domain names on the Internet. CGNA (Committee on Geographical Names Australasia), one of ICSM's permanent committees, and its partners have successfully convinced auDA to reserve a list of up to 30,000 geographic names of localities and significant features. Names on the reserve list will preserve Australia's most significant geographic names including cities, towns and important geographic features such as Uluru, the Bungle Bungles etc., for use by their relevant communities in cyberspace.

The 30,000 or so geographic placenames and feature names that will form the reserve list would still be registrable on the Internet but only under a second level domain (2LD) structure that includes the Australian State or territory in which the name or feature is found. For example: Ballarat.vic.au and Whyalla.sa.au.

The OCOS (one city one site) project supported by NSW's Department of Information Technology and Management (DITM) are conducting a pilot study to put the 2LD structure into practice, for more information on this project go to: www.auda.org.au/policy/submissions/ocos-part1.pdf

Terms Used to Describe the Tidal Interface

Did you know there are over 25 different terms to describe the tidal interface, the boundary between the

land and sea collectively in Australian and New Zealand legislative documents?

During the last six months ICSM's Tidal Interface Working Group has been working on a compilation of these terms, including where they originated from, and has published these in a draft compendium titled *Compendium of Tidal Interface Terms Used in Australia and New Zealand*.
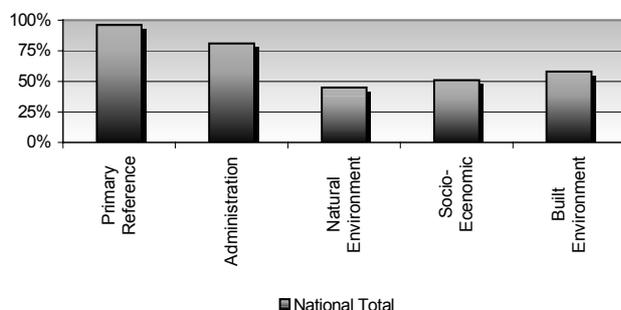
The aim of this study was to quantify the level of variability that existed between terms across the different legislative documents but also provide recommendations as to how these terms could be rationalised, if at all. From the study it was realised that there are seven key terms (predominantly comprising of tidal definitions) that would sufficiently define the boundary between land and sea.

To find out more about this study and/or to get a copy of this draft compendium, contact the ICSM Executive Officer on 02 6201 4292.

Is Your Data GDA Compliant?

According to ICSM's GDA Implementation Working Group, data sets owned by the public sector and defined under the five fundamental elements of: Primary Reference; Administration; Natural Environment; Socio-Economic and Built Environment within each jurisdiction are systematically being transformed to GDA (Geocentric Datum of Australia).

GDA Compliant (Public Sector) Data Sets

■ National Total

From a national perspective, as illustrated in the graph above, the Primary Reference and Administration data sets are on the way to becoming GDA compliant across all jurisdictions.

GDA compliancy gaps appear in Natural Environment Socio-Economic and Built Environment data. The reason for this could be related to the fact that these data sets fall outside the mapping agency's sphere of influence in some jurisdictions or have a lesser imperative to convert due to their lower spatial accuracy requirements.

Next assessment of GDA compliancy will be of private sector data.

Spatial Accuracy of DCDB's

ICSM, through its Permanent Committee on Cadastral

Reform (PCCR), commissioned a study to provide a business case for the improvement of spatial accuracy of Digital Cadastral Databases (DCDB). In summary, the study covered:

-    spatial accuracy requirements for DCDB's from diverse range of Australian and New Zealand stakeholders from both the public and private sectors;

-    a cost-benefit analysis for improving the spatial accuracy of DCDBs; and

-    analysis of direct and intangible benefits.

ICSM with its partners are currently in the process of finalising the report of this study and will make it available from the ICSM web site (www.icsm.gov.au) once complete in the next few months.

New Rural and Urban Addressing Standard

There is now a new Rural and Urban Addressing Standard AS/NZS 4819-2003. This new Standard was prepared by ICSM's Street Addressing Working Group for the Joint Standards Australia/Standards New Zealand Committee IT-004, Geographical Information to supersede AS/NZS 4724:2000, *Geographic Information – Rural addressing.*

The objective of the new Standard is to provide users with a comprehensive guide that encompasses all aspects of rural and urban addressing. As such, this Standard incorporates and makes reference to a number of existing Standards and jurisdictional guidelines relating to addressing.

ICSM has commissioned the development of multi-media CD-ROM that will assist local governments and the general public to get a better understanding of the new Standard and how it's applied in practice.

Launches of the multi-media CD-ROM and the new Standard are in the process of being scheduled throughout Australia and New Zealand. Information on these launches can be obtained from the ICSM Executive Officer phone 02 6201 4292.

Copies of the multi-media CD-ROM, once complete, will be made available to those interested in obtaining a copy free of charge.

ICSM Now a Standing Committee of ANZLIC – Spatial Information Council

ICSM has become a Standing Committee of ANZLIC – Spatial Information Council in an effort to further enhance collaboration between mapping, surveying and the Spatial Information Industry.

Next ICSM Meeting

ICSM's next meeting is scheduled for late November 2003 in Wellington, New Zealand. The next *ICSM News* will therefore be published in December 2003.