

REPORT OF THE BOARD OF SURVEYING AND SPATIAL INFORMATION

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Ensuring public
confidence in the
provision of survey and
spatial information
services



The Hon Tony Kelly MLC
 Minister for Justice
 Minister for Juvenile Justice
 Minister for Emergency Services
 Minister for Lands
 Leader of the House (Legislative Council)
 Minister for Rural Affairs
 Level 34
 Governor Macquarie Tower
 1 Farrer Place
 SYDNEY NSW 2000

Dear Minister

In accordance with the *Surveying Act 2002* the Board of Surveying and Spatial Information submits the following report for the 2005/2006 financial year.

This report has been prepared in accordance with the *Annual Reports (Statutory Bodies) Act 1984* and the *Public Finance and Audit Act 1983*.

I commend this report to you.

Yours sincerely



Warwick Watkins
 President of the Board of Surveying and Spatial Information
 Surveyor General of New South Wales

The Board of Surveying and Spatial Information (the Board), constituted under the *Surveying Act 2002*, to provide for the registration of land and mining surveyors, is the statutory body responsible for standards in surveying and spatial information in New South Wales.

The Board, established on 25 June 2003, took over the functions previously managed by the Board of Surveyors of New South Wales which was constituted under the *Surveyors Act 1929*, which has been repealed.

Mission

The Board in all its dealings strives for excellence and has an ongoing quest for quality. The Board accepts that the community is entitled to expect reliable and professional service at reasonable cost. The Board's philosophy is to ensure that public confidence is maintained in the provision of survey and spatial information services.

Functions of the board

The principal functions of the Board are:

- the registration of land and mining surveyors and ongoing administration of the register
- the investigation of complaints against registered land and mining surveyors and the taking of disciplinary action which may arise as a result of the investigation
- the investigation of: surveyor licensing schemes in other states and territories, the practice to be followed in relation to surveying or in the collection, collation and dissemination of any other kinds of spatial information, any matters referred to it by the Minister in relation to surveying or the spatial information industry

- the provision of advice to the Minister with respect to matters outlined above and all other matters in connection with the administration of the Act.

Aims and objectives Qualifications

- to maintain the register of registered land and mining surveyors
- to grant registration to surveyors under the provisions of the *Surveying Act 2002*
- to establish minimum competency standards
- to maintain the credibility of the register by ensuring surveyors with overseas and interstate academic qualifications meet the standards required under the *Surveying Act 2002*.

Education

- to work with education and professional institutions to develop educational and training programs to ensure quality standards in education and professional development are maintained
- to encourage spatial information practitioners and registered surveyors to undertake appropriate education and relevant continuing professional development to maintain competency
- to assist surveyor's assistants, survey drafters and students of surveying gain qualifications by determining, recording and accepting accrued practical experience.

Membership, Board of Surveying and Spatial Information

During the 2005/06 reporting period there were 12 members on the Board as defined by the *Surveying Act 2002*. The Registrar, two advisers and one observer also attended the meetings. The Board met formally on five occasions.

To ensure the Board is accessible to the wider surveying community, meetings were held in Sydney, Sutton Forest and Kurri Kurri.

Administration

Administrative support to the Board is undertaken by a small secretariat which includes the Registrar, one full time statutory officer and one part time statutory officer. Employees of the Department of Lands provide further support.

The Board is primarily funded by fees levied on surveyors and also some contributions from spatial information stakeholders. All costs associated with administration of the Board were met from fees received.

Achievements

The Board of Surveying and Spatial Information was active in its continuing role of promoting professional development and standards, and has played a significant role in legislative reform following the enactment of the Surveying Bill on 25 June 2003.

The Board continued its practice of meeting and consulting with Surveyor Board representatives from interstate and overseas jurisdictions. The Board also met with the Commissioner for Surveys, ACT to further advance cooperative arrangements implemented six years ago. Representatives of the Board have also met with the Western Australian Mines Survey Board and representatives of the Queensland Surveyors Board to discuss reciprocal arrangements for Mining Surveyors. Following discussion with the Queensland Surveyors Board, a Memorandum of Understanding has been signed to permit mining surveyors to move more easily between the two jurisdictions.

During the reporting year, meetings were held with representative members from NSW professional associations to ensure that both land and mining surveyors fulfil their responsibilities to consumers and for these associations to be more involved in the training of candidates.

The Board's strategic plan has been prepared, milestones have been set, and actions implemented according to the timetable.

Following the development and adoption of a Road Map and Framework for the NSW Spatial Information Strategy the

next stage involves a whole of industry approach to spatial information industry development across the public, private and academic sections. Contractors have been engaged to assist the Board to proceed to the second stage to address the spatial information functions of the Board.

In December 2005 the Board in conjunction with the University of Melbourne sponsored a workshop entitled 'Marine Administration – Understanding the Spatial Dimension' which attracted over 50 participants. The workshop involved leading policy and research experts in the area of marine cadastre, marine policy, and marine safety. The workshop was highly successful in raising knowledge and awareness about spatial information issues in the marine environment and has led to further more focussed research and potential applications. Copies of all presentations can be obtained on CD Rom from the Secretariat.

Qualifications

The Board maintained the Register of Surveyors. The Register contains the names of registered surveyors who are considered competent by the Board to perform land and mining surveys in New South Wales. Arrangements with Surveyor's Boards or other competent authority from other countries (other states and territories of Australia and New Zealand) enable land surveyors with appropriate qualifications and experience to be registered in this state. A similar arrangement exists for mining surveyors between this jurisdiction and Queensland. These reciprocal arrangements are in accordance with National Competition Policy (NCP) Principles and the *Trans-Tasman Mutual Recognition (NSW) Act 1996*.

Education

The Board of Surveying and Spatial Information Medal is presented to the most successful student in the final year of the Bachelor of Surveying and Spatial Information Systems degree course or the Bachelor of Surveying degree course. This year's awards were presented to Sandra Hoffman, from the University of

New South Wales and Jai Reedy, from the University of Newcastle.

Examination

The Board met for a total of eight working days during September 2005 and March 2006 for the purpose of assessing the professional competence of graduate surveyors through examinations. The Board also assessed candidate surveyors undertaking Professional Training Agreements (PTAs). A total of fifteen applicants successfully completed the examinations or PTAs, were issued with Certificates of Competency and accordingly registered as land surveyors. Five candidate surveyors were registered as mining surveyors.

Based on the results of the Board's assessment for Certificates of Competency four prizes are awarded annually:

- the Barr Prize was presented to Anthony Steel for the best cadastral survey project
- the Harvey Prize was presented to Murray Edwards for the best town planning project
- the Augustus Alt Prize was presented to Andrew Thurlow for the best engineering project
- the Neil Ryan Memorial Award was presented to Anthony Steel for the best urban cadastral projects submitted at the April 2005 and September 2005 assessments.

The Surveyor General's Prize was awarded to Rodney Brumby for his performance in a Professional Training Agreement completed during the year.

Professional Training Agreements

The Board introduced Professional Training Agreements (PTA) as an alternative method of assessment of the competency of candidate surveyors. There were 23 candidate land surveyors undertaking training under PTAs to ascertain competency as a land surveyor during the year of which four candidates successfully completed competency requirements.

Candidate training

To assist candidate surveyors attempting assessment the Board conducts a weekend workshop at Kurri Kurri TAFE. This year 63 candidate surveyors and 21 supervising surveyors attended. Board members, invited guests, local surveyors and candidate surveyors attending the workshop were able to discuss matters of mutual interest including proposed changes to Board operations affecting both land and mining surveying industries.

The Board continued to improve and expand the information available at the workshop and improve standards of presentation using the latest technology. Comprehensive manuals, produced by the Board, for the urban cadastral, town planning, engineering design and supervision components of the urban development process were distributed. The set Town Planning project, an alternative to a candidate surveyor's own project, was also made available on CD ROM. These resources and the information sessions provided by guest presenters have proved invaluable to candidates.

Discussion has also been had with representatives from professional organisations to assist in the training of candidates. As a result, workshops are to be conducted by the Association of Consulting Surveyors NSW to assist in

Members of the Board	Representative organisation	Attendance
Mr Warwick Watkins AMP:ISMP (Harv), M NatRes, DipScAgr, HDA (Hons), JP, FAPI, FISA	Surveyor General of NSW	5 meetings
Mr Paul Harcombe B Surv (UNSW), M Geom (Melb)	Chief Surveyor Department of Lands	5 meetings
Mr Mark Gordon B Surv (Hons)	Institute of Surveyors NSW Inc	4 meetings
Mr Andrew Campbell M SurvSc (UNSW), M Planning (UTS)	Institute of Surveyors NSW Inc	5 meetings
Dr Michael Elfick DSurv(Newcastle), Dip Surv Sc (Sydney)		
Dip Town Planning (Sydney)	Institute of Surveyors NSW Inc	5 meetings
Mr Phillip Orr B Surv (Hons)	Australian Institute of Mine Surveyors Limited	3 meetings
Mr Robert Regan B Mining Engineering (Hons 1)	Minister for Mineral Resources	4 meetings
Mr David Bruce B Surv (Hons) (UNSW)	Spatial Sciences Institute of Australia	3 meetings
Mr Ronald Lister B Surv (Hons) (UNSW), Grad Dip Admin (UTS)	Geospatial Information and Technology Association – Australia and New Zealand Division	5 meetings
Mr Vinayan PK Dip Bus Mgt (DET, NSW) M. App. Geo, PhD (Remote Sensing) IIT	Spatial Sciences Institute of Australia	4 meetings
Ms Margaret Hole AM, Diploma in Law, Barristers Admission Board	Representing Minister for Fair Trading	5 meetings
Professor John Fryer FISA, B Surv (UNSW), PhD (UNSW)	University of Newcastle	5 meetings

Non-Board members who attended meetings

1. Graham Leatherland RFD*, Cart Cert, HCart Cert attended four meetings as the Registrar.
2. Anna Allen, MSurv Sc (UNSW), B Eng Surv (Pol); and Grahame Wallis B Surv (UNSW) both attended five meetings as advisers.
3. Frank Blanchfield Assoc Surv (RMIT), ACT Commissioner for Surveys attended five meetings as an observer.

the training of land surveyor candidates in Town Planning and Engineering Design. Further discussion is to be held to assist candidates in cadastral surveying.

Legislation

The Surveying Bill was enacted on 25 June 2003, and the statutory body with the corporate name Board of Surveying and Spatial Information (BOSSI) was constituted. The Surveying (Practice) Amendment Regulation, implemented on 25 June 2003, is under review and is to be implemented in September 2006.

One of the key recommendations of the National Competition Policy (NCP) Review, endorsed by Cabinet and embodied in the above legislation, was that membership of the Board be expanded to include representatives of government, the survey profession, consumers and other professional groups having an interest in survey and spatial information. This recommendation has been implemented and can be seen in the present composition of the Board.

A number of transition issues with the legislation had emerged concerning the composition of the Board and its committees, deceased surveyors and liability of Board members. Legislation to deal with these issues amending the *Surveying Act 2002* was enacted during the reporting year.

Continuing Professional Development (CPD)

On 1 July 2005 the Board implemented a revised CPD Determination. Compliance with CPD requirements is a condition of annual renewal of registration each financial year. The Board's CPD determination is located on the BOSSI internet site and can be found at www.bossi.nsw.gov.au. Compliance with the Board's CPD requirements is

mandatory for surveyors renewing their registration.

The Board has ratified the following five organisations for CPD purposes which include the conduct and assessment of CPD activities and issue of CPD compliance certificates:

- Institution of Surveyors NSW Inc
- Association of Consulting Surveyors NSW
- Australian Institution of Mine Surveyors Limited NSW Division
- University of Newcastle
- Spatial Sciences Institute (ACT).

A CPD Committee has been formed by the Board and is comprised of Board members and representatives from the five organisations ratified by the Board. Reporting to the Committee is the CPD Audit Panel, which undertakes an audit of CPD compliance involving 20% of surveyors renewing their annual registration in accordance with the policy. 312 surveyors were audited this year and 14 of these were deemed not to have complied with the Policy by the Audit Panel.

Committees

To maximise the use of the time available at Board meetings the Board has appointed the following committees to operate within the Board's structure:

Training Committee, Finance and Audit Committee, Spatial Information Committee, Professional Audit and Investigation Committee, Discipline Committee, Land and Mining Surveyor Committee, and Legislation Committee. The latter committee meets on an 'ad hoc' basis.

It is anticipated that further committees may be formed to deal with the expanded role of the Board under the *Surveying Act, 2002*.

Consumer response

During the reporting year the Registrar received more than 50 telephone complaints related to the performance of surveyors. All telephone enquiries were responded to within 24 hours. Written applications received a reply within six to eight weeks due to the frequency of Board meetings but any urgent matters were dealt with out of session.

In accordance with the Board's complaints policy, the Professional Audit and Investigation Committee investigates complaints against surveyors. The policy is located on the BOSSI internet site at www.bossi.nsw.gov.au.

Ten complaints against surveyors made in the reporting year have been either fully investigated or are the subject of ongoing investigation by the Committee. Three complaints were referred to the Disciplinary Committee for disciplinary action against the surveyor involved.

The committee continues to use the standard 'complaints form' template to facilitate the making of complaints by members of the public and other government agencies.

The successful use of complaint resolution methods by the Board has resulted in few formal complaints.

Action Plan for Women

The Board has continued to sponsor the Surveyor General's Women in Surveying Scholarship at both the University of Newcastle and the University of New South Wales. The Board uses the scholarship to encourage women to enter the surveying profession. This year's scholarship was awarded to Simone Nadine who was enrolled in her

first year of studies for the Bachelor of Surveying course at the University of Newcastle.

Grants to non-government organisations

During the reporting year the Board granted \$2000 to the University of Newcastle for the Surveyor General's Women in Surveying Scholarships.

For information on consultants, payment performance, risk management and insurance, and all other administrative procedures, policies and processes for this report please refer to the Department of Lands Annual Report Appendices.

Performance	2003/04	2004/05	2005/06
Registered Surveyors in NSW	1068	1051	1044
New registrations			
By way of Certificate of Competency ¹	126	17	28
By way of Letters of Accreditation from Reciprocating Boards	13	4	5
Removal of Name from Register²			
Non-payment of Annual Roll fees	127	89	126
At own Request	24	23	22
Deceased	2	2	1
Restoration of Name to Register	102	76	109
Letter of Accreditation Issued to Reciprocating Boards	9	5	9
Candidate Enrolments	44	46	46
Total Financial Candidates	142	153	177
Assessment of Overseas Academic Qualifications	7	4	8
Assessment of Interstate Academic Qualifications	0	0	6
Emeritus Certificates Awarded	17	19	12

1. The larger than normal increase in registrations by Certificate of Competency in 2003/04 is attributed to a significant number of Mining Surveyors being registered for the first time following the enactment of the *Surveying Act 2002* on 25 June 2003. Prior to this date Mining Surveyors had not been registered by the Board. Competency certificates for Mining Surveyors may not have been issued by the Board as competency for these surveyors had been certified by the Coal Mines Qualification Board prior to the enactment of the *Surveying Act 2002*. Following the downturn in new registrations in 2004/05, the Board's initiatives in working with education, professionals and employers, has seen a growth in the number of new registrations during 2005/06 and this trend is expected to continue.

2. Reasons for people being removed from the register include retirement, relocation interstate, or no longer practicing surveyors.