



**Economic and Social Council**

Distr.: General

26 June 2007

Original: English

---

**Ninth United Nations Conference on the  
Standardization of Geographical Names**  
New York, 21 - 30 August 2007  
Item 9 (c) of the provisional agenda\*  
**National standardization:  
Treatment of names in multilingual areas**

**Storage and Depiction of Dual Names in Australasia**

Submitted by Australia\*\*

---

\* E/CONF.98/1

\*\* Prepared by Greg Windsor, Secretary Committee for Geographical Names in Australasia.

## SUMMARY

In October 1992 the Committee for Geographical Names in Australasia (CGNA) published its policy guidelines for the recording and use of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander place names. This document sought to create a set of national standards for the collection and use of indigenous place names thus ensuring a consistent approach between jurisdictions throughout Australia and New Zealand.

These policy guidelines recognised that a dual naming system is seen to be an acceptable methodology for recognising traditional indigenous names alongside introduced names of the same feature. As such, a variety of dual naming policies have been implemented and developed by various placename authorities throughout the region.

This paper seeks to:

- Define the current dual naming systems currently in use by jurisdictions throughout Australasia,
- Outline how these systems differ in regards to both the depiction and storage of dual names,
- Compare the methodologies used for the depiction and storage of dual names in Australasia with international best practice,
- Outline any shortfalls in the current methods used for the depiction and storage of dual names, and finally,
- Make recommendations on the standardisation of dual names within Australasia.

These recommendations will be discussed at the next CGNA meeting in October, 2007.

## **Introduction**

Dual names have been recognised in both Australia and New Zealand for over twenty years. They are seen as a management and educative tool for the naming of physical and environmental features of significance to the local Aboriginal, Maori or Torres Strait Islander communities when an official name already exists and when a name change is not possible or acceptable.<sup>1</sup>

In Australia, individual States and Territories have the responsibility for place naming and subsequently dual naming. CGNA was established to ensure consistency between all of the States and Territories as well as New Zealand. At its meeting in October 2004 the CGNA noted inconsistency in the approaches between jurisdictions in relation to the depiction and storage of dual names. CGNA commissioned this report to further investigate this issue.

As a basis for this report all State and Territory Place Names Authorities were surveyed and asked to comment on the systems they use to store dual names and on the guidelines they publish in relation to the depiction of dual names on maps and signage.

### **Dual Naming Storage Methodologies in Use throughout Australasia**

Through the survey it was established that the methodologies used for dual naming could be broken down into three major types, with each type having either a fixed or transitional nature.

Figure 1 depicts the types and respective nature of the dual naming systems in use throughout Australasia

---

<sup>1</sup> CGNA, 3.3.5 Procedural, Policy guidelines for the recording and use of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Place Names, October 1992.

# Dual Naming Types

## More than One Official Language

### Multiple Naming

A single feature has an Indigenous name and an Introduced Name. Each name comes from one of the official languages. Only occurs in countries with two or more official languages.

(eg. NZ)

## One Official Language

### Composite Naming

A single feature has an Indigenous name and an Introduced Name. Both names are joined and formally gazetted as a single name. Normally occurs in countries with one official language.

(eg. NT)

### Twin Naming

A single feature has an Indigenous name and an Introduced Name. Both names are individually gazetted and attributed to the single feature. Normally occurs in countries with one official language.

(eg. NSW)

### Dual Naming Nature

**Fixed** – Names are recognised as being permanently assigned to the feature.  
(eg. NSW)

**Transitional** – Indigenous name assigned to a feature with a view of dropping the introduced name in the future.  
(eg. WA)

Figure 1. Dual Naming Types Used in Australasia

In countries with more than one official language, for instance New Zealand, both the indigenous name and the introduced name become part of each respective official language. As such, the indigenous name becomes a de facto translation for the introduced name, and vice versa. All official documentation, books, maps and signage are required to be recorded in both languages. Therefore, each name is used in its correct language context. This system of dual naming is referred to as *multiple naming*.

Countries with one official language, such as Australia, use processes that incorporate the indigenous name into the official language. These processes can be broadly categorised into the sub groups of *composite naming* and *twin naming*.

Composite naming takes the indigenous name and the introduced name and couples them into a single toponym. Generally a solidus (/) is used to separate the two parts of the name. For all intents and purposes the feature has one name which is made up of two components, each of which having its own history, origin and meaning. Generally one published notice in the relevant government gazette is all that is required to formalise such a name. This methodology is seen to be compliant to international principles on univocity, that is, one name one place. However, it could be said that it formalises a name which is neither the introduced name nor the indigenous name and in so doing further distorts the nomenclature of a given area.

Twin naming recognises both the indigenous name and the introduced name as a name within its own right. Each name is generally formalised by individual gazettal notices and each has its own recorded history, origin and meaning. Separate guidelines dictate how both names should be shown together but again the solidus (/) seems to be the common separator for this type of dual name. Whilst addressing the issue of introducing new toponyms onto the landscape, this system contravenes international univocity principles.

As suggested, the nature of dual naming can be either fixed or transitional. Fixed dual naming recognises that both the indigenous name and the introduced names will be permanently assigned to a given feature from that point in time on.

Transitional dual naming assigns the Indigenous name to a feature with a view of dropping the introduced name in the future. In this way the naming jurisdiction can revert from introduced names to original Indigenous names whilst allowing the community time to adjust to the name change.

It is important to note that there is no direct relationship between dual naming type and dual naming nature. Each dual naming type can have either nature with the choice ultimately being made by the naming jurisdictions.

### **Dual Naming Depiction Methodologies in Use throughout Australasia**

As with dual name storage standards, depiction is dealt with differently by each of the jurisdictions throughout Australasia. Survey responses indicate

that some jurisdictions see the depiction of dual names as a discretionary decision made by cartographers and sign writers, whilst others publish standards to assist publishers of this information. Table one shows a cross section of methodologies used by the different jurisdictions throughout Australasia.

Jurisdiction	Depiction Guideline
WA	There is no policy for showing these names on maps etc
VIC	The second name in the dual name is placed in brackets. Text placement is as per cartographic requirements. Regarding the order of names - the former Place Names Committee supplied nomenclature sheets to the Victorian cartographic section and the cartographers acted on the ordering of the names as shown on these nomenclature sheets.
NSW	The English language name shall be in standard font and the Aboriginal name shall be in italic font except where only an Aboriginal name is used, in which case it shall be in standard font. No preference is given to which name should be shown first.
ACT	The English language name shall be in standard font and the Aboriginal name shall follow in italic font except where only an Aboriginal name is used, in which case it shall be in standard font.
SA	Uses dual naming, with the current policy being to use a solidus as the separator. The primary name in the name most likely to be used by the local community. Further work need to be done with communication of dual name forms, with possible alteration to the gazetteer structure and also in the use of transitional dual names as a means of removing duplication of introduced names and correct inaccuracies in spelling of indigenous names.

Table 1. Dual Name Depiction Guidelines Used in Australasia

### International Standards in Relation to the Storage and Depiction of Dual Names

CGNA has offered some relevant guidance in the depiction of dual names. A procedural guideline was published in the policy guidelines for the recording and use of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Place Names that indicated how a primary name is to be established. This guideline states "*Whichever of the two names that is most likely to be used by the local community is to be the primary name.*"<sup>2</sup>

A document review failed to discover any international standards directly related to the depiction and storage of dual names.

<sup>2</sup> CGNA, 3.3.5 Procedural, Policy guidelines for the recording and use of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Place Names, October 1992.

Related guidelines on the depiction of exonyms and / or unofficial variant names are readily available and published and are included in this report for further information.

1. Extract from: "Cartographic design and production, Keates J. S., 1973"

*"Most alternative names apply to towns. Where an alternative form of the name also has to be included on the map, it should be placed symmetrically below or following, in a smaller size, and in brackets. If at all possible in should not be placed in a position quite different to the principle name, but should appear clearly as the alternative form."*

2. Extract from: "Great Britain Ministry of Defense Military Engineering Vol. xiii Cartography 1971"

#### **"Conventional English Names**

*5. The names of countries, and of regions or geographic features of continental or international extension are given the English form. Examples of such features are oceans, seas which wash the shores of more then one nation, rivers which flow through several countries, and mountain ranges which form international frontiers: in these cases the local official name may be added in brackets after the conventional English name.*

*6. Similarly in the case of very important features falling within any one country, it is permissible to add the English conventional name in brackets after the local name, though this is usually only done in small scale or atlas mapping."*

3. Extract from: "Cartographic Journal, June 2000"

*"A name with a parenthetical alternate name can be placed on one line or two. If in two lines, it is best aligned to the lower right or lower left of the symbol so that the primary name is the one closer to the symbol. Two lines should not be centred in line with the symbol (figure 24)".*

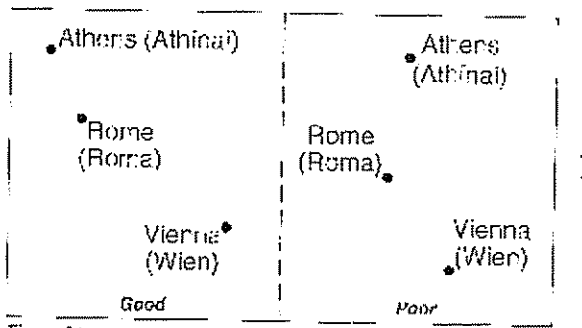
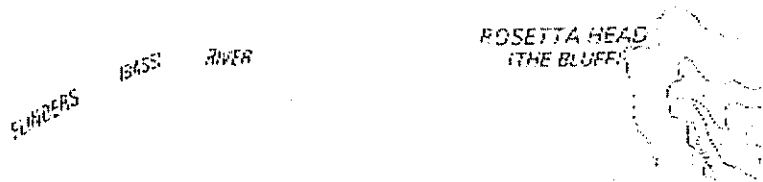


Figure 24

4. Extract From: Royal Australian Survey Corps, Symbolisation all series (SYMBAS) 1988"

*"Alternate names are preferably positioned below the primary name in the case of a spot or area feature, and following the primary name in the case of linear features. Alternate names are shown in parentheses and in the style of type as the primary name, but one size smaller. An exception to this rule occurs when the primary name is in the smallest type available or is in the smallest legible size.*

Examples:



*In the case where the primary name includes a generic term (e.g. "River, "RANGE" etc.) the alternate name is placed between the primary and the generic term. Single word alternatives are placed adjacent to the primary name"*

### **Shortcomings in Relation to Current Depiction Standards**

There are obvious benefits in having guidelines for the consistent depiction of dual names. Discretionary delegation given to individual cartographers will inevitably lead to inconsistency between map series or even worse individual map products. This inconsistency will ultimately lead to confusion in the greater community.

In saying this, however, the dual naming depiction standards currently in use by the jurisdictions throughout Australasia are problematic. For example, if one insists that the indigenous part of a dual name is to be displayed in italics, confusion will inevitably follow if a dual name is assigned to a hydrographic feature. Cartographic principles dictate that when labelling water features one should use italic font in general, which in turn indicates water flow.<sup>3</sup> As such, if a dual name is assigned to a feature such as a river or a lake both the indigenous and the introduced name will be shown in italics on map products thus making the standard irrelevant.

The standard in use in Victoria which suggests that the indigenous name be placed in brackets seems to be well founded as it is based on cartographic principles used in the depiction of exonyms and alternate names. This standard is also problematic in that the brackets indicate a

<sup>3</sup> UNBC GIS Lab, Map Symbolization, 5. Labelling Features, (online)  
<http://www.gis.unbc.ca/courses/geog205/labs/lab5/index.php> , accessed 19 August 2005



subordination of the name, which, in turn can be interpreted as discriminatory. This issue was raised with the Registrar of Placenames in Victoria recently when a local Indigenous group refused to recognise any dual name if they were depicted in brackets.<sup>4</sup>

Standardisation of dual name depiction is also seen as a priority when one considers issues surrounding sea/air rescues (SAR). Most jurisdictions have considered the provisions of land based emergency services in the development of their respective dual naming policies. Safeguards were included in most of these policies to ensure legal addresses remained unique thus eliminating problems in the provision of emergency services such as police, fire and ambulance.

However, if a mariner raises a MAYDAY he or she will give a position in latitude / longitude or a bearing a distance from a named feature, for example, 10nm NNE Point Perpendicular.

So if one considers a feature in the area of Maningrida, NT, the Australian Hydrographic Office have charted the name West Point (Gumarradadji). As such, the MAYDAY maybe 10nm NNE West Point or 10nm NNE Gumarradadji. The reporting may depend on whether the mariner used the Indigenous or introduced placename.<sup>5</sup>

## **Recommendations**

CGNA has previously recognised that each of its member jurisdictions operate under different legislation and therefore different policies and guidelines. As such, it is recommended that CGNA endorse all the current methods used for the storage of dual names throughout Australasia. Further, that the Policy guidelines for the recording and use of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Place Names be updated to include the definitions for each dual name type, that is, *multiple naming*, *composite naming* and *twin naming* and each dual name nature, that is, *fixed* and *transitional*.

It is also recommended that CGNA endorse the following guideline in relation to the depiction of dual names with a view of referring it to ICSM for approval and distribution to all mapping agencies. Further that this guideline is added to the Policy guidelines for the recording and use of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Place Names.

### ***DUAL NAME DEPICTION GUIDELINES***

1. *Both the indigenous part and the introduced part of the dual name should be in the same font, font type and colour. If a visual separator is required, it should be a solidus "/".*

---

<sup>4</sup> Victorian Registrar of Placenames, RE: CGNA Teleconference, Email, 03 May 2005

<sup>5</sup> Kevin Slade, AHO, Dual name Depiction, Email, 05 May 2005

2. *In Australia, section 3.3.5 of CGNA's policy guidelines for the recording and use of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Place Names refers: whichever of the two names of the same feature that is most likely to be used by the local community is to be used first in a sequence.*
3. *In New Zealand, the contemporary practice is generally to use the original Māori name as the preceding name (i.e. in recognition of first rights of discovery), followed by a forward slash (meaning 'or'), and then the non-Māori name. Other forms of dual names are considered on a case-by-case basis.*
4. *Where appropriate, jurisdictions should give clear directions on the process for identifying the naming sequence most likely to reach the widest acceptance in the local community to:*
  - *Mapping authorities and agencies and users of spatial data,,*
  - *Any other department or agency involved in the naming process.*

*It is further recommended that naming authorities review dual names per these directions at regular intervals. Naming authorities should ensure the dual name sequence is available to mapping organisations.*

## References

CGNA, 3.3.5 Procedural, Policy guidelines for the recording and use of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Place Names, October 1992.

UNBC GIS Lab, Map Symbolization, 5. Labelling Features, (online)

Victorian Registrar of Placenames, RE: CGNA Teleconference, Email, 03 May

Kevin Slade, AHO, Dual name Depiction, Email, 05 may 2005

Keates J. S, Cartographic design and production, 1973

Great Britain Ministry of Defence Military Engineering vol xiii Cartography 1971

Cartographic Journal, June 2000

Royal Australian Survey Corps, Symbolisation all series (SYMBAS) 1988