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FOURTH UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE ON THE
STANDARDIZATION OF GEOGRAPHICAL NAMES
Geneva, 24 August-14 September 1982
Item 4 of the provisional agenda*

REPORTS BY DIVISIONS AND GOVERNMENTS ON THE SITUATION IN
THEIR REGIONS AND COUNTRIES AND ON THE PROGRESS MADE IN
THE STANDARDIZATION OF GEOGRAPHICAL NAMES SINCE THE THIRD
UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE ON THE STANDARDIZATION OF
GEOGRAPHICAL NAMES

Report by Australia**

Paper presented by Australia

* E/CONF.74/1.

** Prepared by Division of National Mapping, Canberra.

Australia has no national authority for the co-ordination of geographical names for any purpose other than mapping, which is effected through the National Mapping Council as necessary.

Each state (Queensland, New South Wales, Victoria, Tasmania, South Australia and Western Australia) and each territory (Northern Territory and Australian Capital Territory) has its own authority for geographical names. Brief reports by each of these authorities follow, with a report by the Antarctic Names Committee of Australia.

STATE OF QUEENSLAND

Authority

The Queensland Place Names Board
PO Box 234
NORTH QUAY BRISBANE Qld 4000
AUSTRALIA

Activities

New legislation has been enacted in Queensland which effectively ends the former two-tiered system of Place Names Board and Place Names Committee. There is now an enlarged Board comprising Surveyor-General as Chairman and six members, plus the provision for the creation and termination of ad hoc Committees whose members may be drawn from any source in the community. These Committees will address specific problems and will usually be convened by a Board member. The former Committee system proved too wide ranging and inflexible to contribute very much to Board effectiveness. Previous legislation prescribed a certain number of organisations from which Committee members were appointed. This provision precluded the involvement of interested persons with an expertise in particular matters associated with place-naming.

The Queensland Place Names Act 1981 brings the State's place names legislation up to date to make the place-naming process more cost-effective for both Government and non-Government bodies and to preserve the right of citizens or interested parties to object in writing to any place-naming proposal with which they may disagree.

Standardization of Nomenclature of Fraser Island

With the gazettal of 126 place names on Fraser Island, the Board completed its biggest project for some years. Standardization of the nomenclature of Fraser Island had become urgent because of the island's growing popularity. Maps being published by various agencies showed numerous discrepancies in place names. Failure to correct these could have had serious consequences in cases of emergency.

Fifty-six of the names approved were new names, all of them recalling the history of the island, both Aboriginal and European. For instance, Marloo Bay and Maheno Beach commemorate well-known shipwrecks of 1912 and 1935, respectively. The former Aboriginal names of First, Second, Third and Fourth Creeks (Gerowweea, Govi, Taleerba and Tooloora) were restored. Allom Lake was named for the first Forestry Department Surveyor who worked on Fraser Island. The 70 names that were not new have been in use by island dwellers for generations but had never been shown on official maps.

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Boundary Delimitation

The Board has completed the task of defining and naming localities throughout the area of the fastest-growing Local Authority in Queensland - the Shire of Albert. The gazettal of 19 localities during the year brought the number of bounded localities in the Shire to 61. The canal estates have been divided into four localities - Broadbeach Waters, Burleigh Waters, Currumbin Waters and Mermaid Waters. Broadbeach Waters includes the Cypress Gardens, Florida Gardens, Miami Keys, Rialto and Rio Vista Estates. The "Waters" theme was considered appropriate, and each locality is also associated with the Gold Coast suburb which it adjoins, viz: Broadbeach, Burleigh Heads, Currumbin and Mermaid Beach. "Elanora" an Aboriginal word meaning "a home by the sea", the former name for Palm Beach, has been revived as that of a locality adjacent to the latter.

"Bannockburn" and "Windaroo", on the left bank of the Albert River near Beenleigh were formerly the names of properties once owned by the pioneering Watt and Heck families.

The variety of new and altered names approved by the Board reflects the breadth of its responsibilities.

STATE OF NEW SOUTH WALES

Authority

Geographical Names Board of New South Wales
GPO Box 39
SYDNEY NSW 2001
AUSTRALIA

Activities

During the period under review the Board has continued with its major undertaking of collecting and reviewing the place names of the State. This initial view is all but completed and a register containing over 60 000 approved names has been prepared and recorded in card format. Information placed on these cards include the official name, designation, alternative names, location (including map reference), latitude and longitude, and a brief description of the feature. Provision has also been made for recording the origin and history of the name, but to date little work has been undertaken in this field. The Board is currently investigating the feasibility of incorporating this register in a flexible computerised system from which a gazetteer of official place names will be prepared.

In this initial review of the State's nomenclature it has not been possible to carry out an indepth study sufficient to satisfy all the objectives of the Board, such a study will take many years to complete. However, a firm foundation has been established for this work to be undertaken and will be high on the Board's list of priorities.

A recent decision has been made to publish a dictionary of historical names associated with the settlement and development of New South Wales. This dictionary is planned as a contribution towards the commemoration of the bicentenary of the European settlement of Australia, to be celebrated in 1988. The dictionary will be but the first step in the long-term project of compiling a dictionary of all official place names with a record of their form, spelling, meaning, pronunciation, origin and history.

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STATE OF VICTORIA

Authority

Office of the Place Names Committee
Department of Crown Lands and Survey
State Public Offices
MELBOURNE Vic 3002
AUSTRALIA

Activities

Since the last Conference the Committee's Register of Place Names has increased to include, in the next edition (4th ed. expected to be published towards the end of 1982), approximately 37 000 place names in the State of Victoria. The Committee also has a programme of changing the referenced co-ordinates in the Register from small-scale map references to the largest available scale grid references.

The increase in the number of entries and changes are based on National Mapping 1:100 000 map sheets and 1:25 000 map sheets published by the Department of Crown Lands and Survey (Division of Survey and Mapping).

With the agreement of the State Rivers and Water Supply Commission the Committee has adopted standard usages for certain generic terms:

"Lake" is used for both natural and artificial water storages where public access is permitted for recreational purposes.

"Reservoir" is used in cases where the body of water is used for domestic or industrial consumption and to which there is limited public access.

Other matters previously reported continue.

STATE OF TASMANIA

Authority

The Nomenclature Board of Tasmania
Lands Department
GPO Box 44A
HOBART Tas 7001
AUSTRALIA

Activities

There have been four changes in personnel in the Board's membership in this period.

Early in this period, examination of names for the 1:100 000 map series was completed, but of course additional names and amendments have needed consideration for subsequent editions.

With the recent introduction of larger scale mapping, the Board is now increasingly involved in the examination of names, particularly of minor roads, which result from the greater detail.

Particular matters which the Board has considered over this period include: an increasing number of requests for names to be applied to roads in rural subdivisions, naming of a number of beaches, of parks and reserves in the main centres of population, of Forest Reserves and various Crown Land Reserves,

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Protected Areas, etc., of Hydro Electric Commission dams and weirs, and of features in the South West (particularly those on and in the vicinity of the Franklin River) the Board has also been greatly involved in cave nomenclature and it has adopted the principle that the names of tourist caves only be indicated on maps.

There have been relatively few objections to decisions of the Board over this period - less than twenty, about half of which have been upheld.

Another task which the Board has recently completed is the preparation of a Glossary of Definition of Terms, applicable to topographical features in Tasmania, which it is intended to publish with the proposed Gazetteer.

Over the last couple of years this office has been requested by a number of instrumentalities to provide an alphabetical gazetteer; these have been provided, at a charge, in the form of a computer print-out taken from the up-to-date master file at that time.

Statistically, from the middle of 1976 until the end of 1981 there have been over 5 500 additional names registered in the master file, almost 3 000 of which have been officially assigned; there are now almost 17 000 official names assigned in Tasmania.

STATE OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA

Authority

Geographical Names Board of South Australia
Department of Lands
GPO Box 1047
ADELAIDE SA 5001
AUSTRALIA

Activities

A staff of five drafting officers is employed to assist the Geographical Names Board.

Apart from historical research on behalf of Government bodies and the public, nomenclature checking of mapping is undertaken on behalf of National Mapping, the Department of the Army, the South Australian Lands Department Mapping Branch and the Department of Mines and Energy.

This nomenclature checking is to be used as a basis for the compilation of a gazetteer as required under the Geographical Names Act, 1969, employing computer based technology for its production.

A loose leaf file of approximately 15 000 to 20 000 names is maintained, and historical detail is known for some 10 000 of those names.

STATE OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA

Authority

Nomenclature Advisory Committee
Department of Lands and Surveys
PERTH WA 6000
AUSTRALIA

Activities

Investigations: Completed nomenclature examinations for 51-1:250 000 map sheets.

Editing: Editing for Nomenclature completed for:

Division of	89 - 1:100 000 map sheets
National Mapping	27 - 1:250 000 map sheets
Lands and Surveys	10 - Tourist Map Publications
	17 - 1:25 000 map sheets
	161 - 1:50 000 map sheets
Department of Defence (Army)	7 - 1:25 000 map sheets
	43 - 1:50 000 map sheets
	5 - 1:100 000 map sheets
Mines Department	2 - 1:1 000 000 map sheets
	6 - 1:250 000 map sheets
RAN Hydrographer	9 - Hydrographic Charts
National Parks Board	8 - Publications
Public Works Department	19 - Publications

Naming: The creation and naming of 234 new localities together with boundary amendments to 94 existing localities.

Recommendations made for the naming of 762 National Parks/Reserves/Gardens/Parks/Nature Reserves.

Subdivisional and survey plans examined and after consultation with relevant local authorities approval given for 6342 new road names and the amendment of 1157 existing road names.

Investigation completed for rural road systems within 55 local authority areas and miscellaneous plans and gazettal action resulted in 4219 rural road names being recorded.

Miscellaneous: 5245 written or verbal requests received for technical or historical information.

Computerisation: Computerisation of records has continued in line with the recommended programmes:

Western Australia Road Names File

This information now contains 40 967 entries and the following information is recorded on each entry:

Name, Suffix, Local Government Area, Locality, Correspondence Number, Approval Date, Gazettal Date, Plan Reference, Origin and Comments.

Map Sheet Names File

Alphabetical and numerical listing for all standard map sheets in Western Australia.

Townsite and Locality File

Lists all townsite, locality and place names and records name (flagged with L for locality, P for place name, A for archived name no longer in use, R for renamed see new entry), Distance from Perth, New Name (if applicable), Local Government Code Number, Post Code, Date of Gazettal, Correspondence number, Plan Reference, Latitude, Longitude, comments.

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Feature Names: The Section has a card gazetteer of approx. 45 000 feature names which records the name, description, 1:250 000 and 1:50 000 sheet numbers, latitude, longitude, co-ords (M), nomenclature file number, origin and remarks. Computerisation of these records is being undertaken.

NORTHERN TERRITORY

Authority

Place Names Committee
Department of Lands
PO Box 1680
DARWIN NT 5794
AUSTRALIA

Activities

The Place Names Committee investigates and recommends to the Administrator names of public places and natural features. During the period 1977-1982 the Committee has investigated a large number of place names in support of topographic mapping and charting activities in the Northern Territory. The names on all new maps are checked by the Committee before publication.

AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

Authority

Canberra National Memorials Committee
PO Box 158
CANBERRA CITY ACT 2601
AUSTRALIA

Activities

To date, there is no legislation in the Australian Capital Territory governing the use of names for geographical or topographical features.

However, work has proceeded in the past four years to develop a framework for Geographical Names legislation, and a draft outline for the ordinance has been prepared.

ANTARCTICA

Authority

Antarctic Names Committee of Australia
C/- Antarctic Division
Department of Science and Technology
Channel Highway
KINGSTON Tas 7150
AUSTRALIA

Activities

During the period 1977-1982, the Antarctic Names Committee of Australia met twice and also carried out work by correspondence between the Secretary and members.

The committee is currently being reconstructed.

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The committee considered names on the revised 1:10 million and 1:20 million maps of Antarctica. Names have been approved for features explored by the Australian National Antarctic Research Expeditions.
