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Geographical names

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Directory of Agencies in the Americas involved with
Geographical Names

Submitted by PAIGH

DIRECTORY OF AGENCIES IN THE AMERICAS
INVOLVED WITH GEOGRAPHICAL NAMES



PUBLISHED BY

WORKING GROUP ON GAZETTEERS AND GEOGRAPHICAL NAMES

COMMISSION ON CARTOGRAPHY

PAN AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF GEOGRAPHY AND HISTORY

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INTRODUCTION

General

This publication is a revision of the Directory of Agencies in the Americas Involved with Geographical Names and Terminology issued in 1978 by the Committee on Geographical Terminology of the Pan American Institute of Geography and History (PAIGH). The new edition continues to provide information about the structure and function of names agencies in the PAIGH community, but the title has been changed to reflect the new PAIGH program in the area of geographic names. This edition is published in English and Spanish.

The PAIGH Working Group on Gazetteer and Geographical Names

The earlier publication provided information about those organizations in the PAIGH community that were involved in various aspects of geographic names and related terminology. By presenting a list of these organizations, it was hoped that their common work could receive appropriate attention and that collaboration between them would be enhanced. In 1978, however, the work of the responsible committee on geographical terminology was terminated, and no further coordination was possible within PAIGH.

The approval of a PAIGH program in the same year to produce a series of topographic maps at the scale of 1:250,000 generated new interest in the field of geographic names. Specifically, this series presented a foundation for a new PAIGH program to produce national gazetteers based on names from the maps. Accordingly, PAIGH authorities at the XIIth General Assembly in Chile in 1982 approved the creation of the Working Group on Gazetteers under the Committee on Topographic Maps and Aerophotogrammetry of the Cartography Commission. Members of the Working Group met to develop specifications and to carry out specified assignments to promote work on gazetteers.

Time showed that additional concerns had to be addressed. Members of the Working Group could find little time to work on gazetteers. The national production rates of the PAIGH maps varied. Certain aspects of the gazetteer specifications required clarification. In addition, agencies working on names were using different methods of standardizing names for application on the maps. Trips to some countries by the Principal Project Coordinator and his assistant, Mr. Rafael Petitón of the Inter American Geodetic Survey, in 1985 indicated that members of the Working Group and their agencies desired assistance in other aspects of names work. Specifically, they asked that the Working Group expand its functions to include all aspects of names standardization. They justified the request on the grounds that a program to produce gazetteers has to be based on a comprehensive program of names treatment. With their support, the function of the Working Group was expanded to include all relevant activities and the title was changed to Working Group on Gazetteers and Geographic Names. Another change was to abolish the title Principal Project Coordinator and the functions of the three Regional Project Coordinators. The Working Group is now headed by a Chairman (the undersigned) and a Vice Chairman (Lic. Miguel Cano, Director of the Instituto Cartográfico Nacional of Venezuela). As before, Mr. Petitón works as Assistant to the Chairman.

Explanation of Contents

The information about agencies in this directory is divided into as many as six categories, depending on data furnished by committee members:

1. Agency. The name of the agency or agencies that engage in work on names or terminology. Notes indicate where an organization acts in the place of an official standardizing body, or where more than one organization has responsibility. Furthermore, mention is made of those governments that plan to establish an official agency. The addresses of the organizations are given.
2. Principal officials. The names of the principal persons who have responsibility for managing programs of the cited organizations. Addresses for officials are given only where this information was provided. Where no individual addresses are given, addresses of the appropriate agency should be used when corresponding with officials.
3. Establishment of agency. The date when the organization was created, and the law that established it.
4. Structure of agency. A brief description of the organizational structure of the agency. In addition, a short citation of the agency's relationship with other offices may be furnished. In some cases, reference to a publication containing this information is given.
5. Procedures of agency. A summary statement about procedures followed in carrying out tasks. Reference to office or field techniques may be supplied. In some cases, a general or specific reference to a publication containing this information is given.
6. Publications. Reference to publications, books, maps, charts, dictionaries, or other documents that deal with names and terminology or that portray them. In many cases, the reference is generalized rather than specific, and the reader is advised to request additional details from the agency.

Changes and Revisions

Except as noted for several entries, information in this directory represents data submitted by represented nations during the first half of 1986. Readers will note variations in the amount and kind of information in the directory. Mistakes or new information should be brought to the attention of the undersigned for use in the next edition.

Dr. Richard R. Randall
Chairman
Working Group on Gazetteers and Geographic Names
Commission on Cartography
Pan American Institute of Geography and History
c/o Defense Mapping Agency
Building 56, U.S. Naval Observatory
Washington, D.C. 20305-3000
U.S.A.

ARGENTINA

Agency

Ministerio de Defensa:
Instituto Geográfico Militar
Servicio de Hidrografía Naval
Tránsito Aéreo y Aerodromos

Principal Officials

Commander-in-Chief of the Army
Commander-in-Chief of the Navy
Commander-in-Chief of the Air Force

Profesor Héctor Oscar José Pena
Jefe División Geográfica
Instituto Geográfico Militar
Cabildo 301, Buenos Aires, Argentina

Establishment of Agency

Law 12.696; Law 10.922; Code 17.285; Decree No. 8944/46 (regulates names with topographic information, including nomenclature).

Procedures of Agency

Information is obtained from field survey data, from official authorities, and from prominent settlers of the area. Set rules were established for names in Antarctica. All names which appear on maps with topographic information, compiled by the national agencies, are approved by the Military Geographic Institute, under Decree No. 8944/46, including nomenclature. If a topographic feature has no name, a name will be assigned using the following criteria:

1. Proper names of famous people.
2. Historical events - significant dates.
3. Names of religious characters.
4. Appearance of feature.
5. Some unusual characteristic.
6. Historical reference.

All information found by explorers, groups, or expeditions, concerning changes, corrections, or assignments of new names are analyzed by experts in the area under consideration.

BOLIVIA

Agency

Instituto Geográfico Militar
Avenida Saavedra, Miraflores
La Paz, Bolivia

(This organization acts in lieu of an official names agency. The government plans to establish such an agency.)

Principal Official

Cnl. Jorge Patiño Aramayo, Director

BRAZIL

Agency

Fundação Instituto Brasileiro de Geografia e Estatística
Av. Franklin Roosevelt, 166
Rio de Janeiro, Brasil

(The organization acts in lieu of an official names agency.)

Principal Officials

Dr. Edmar Lisboa Bacha, President-Fundação I.B.G.E.
Eng. Mauro Pereira de Mello, Director of Geodesy and Cartography,
Fundação I.B.G.E.
Eng. Murillo Lobo, Fundação I.B.G.E.

Publications

Toponymic Index of the World International Chart, 1:1,000,000.

CANADA

Agency

Canadian Permanent Committee on Geographical Names
615 Booth Street
Ottawa, Canada K1A 0E0

Principal Officials

Jean-Paul Drolet, Chairman
Alan Rayburn, Executive Secretary

Establishment of Agency

Established in 1897; its membership, powers, duties and functions are described in Order in Council PC 1969-1458. (July 22, 1969).

Structure of Agency

The Committee is composed of nine representatives from federal departments concerned with mapping, archives, defense, translation, Indian reserves and parks, a representative appointed for each of the ten provinces of Canada, a representative of each of the two territories, and the chairpersons of two of the advisory committees, for a total of 23 members. The work of the Committee is assisted by three advisory committees on undersea feature names, on research and on glaciological and alpine names. The activities of the Committee are coordinated by a Secretariat in the Surveys and Mapping Branch, Department of Energy, Mines and Resources. Some of the provinces have geographic names boards and active programs in field research and name processing. The work of the Committee is conducted in both English and French, the official languages of Canada.

Procedures of Agency

It is the responsibility of the Committee to deal with all questions of geographical nomenclature affecting Canada. Names within provinces become decisions of the Committee as decided by the respective provinces, and in the territories as decided by the respective territories. There is agreement that decisions on names in federal crown lands in the provinces and territories will be decided jointly with the appropriate federal department. The Committee meets once each year to report on developments at both the federal and provincial levels and to discuss topics of mutual interest. The principles and procedures of the Committee are defined in a booklet entitled Principles and Procedures, which is made widely available to the public service and the general public.

Publications

Gazetteers for each province (except Quebec) and territory are produced for the Committee by the Surveys and Mapping Branch. The Branch also publishes the twice yearly journal, CANOMA, for the CPCGN.

CHILE

Agency

Instituto Geográfico Militar
Nueva Santa Isabel 1640
Santiago, Chile

Instituto Hidrográfico de la Armada
Casilla 324
Valparaíso, Chile

Servicio Aerofotogramétrico de la Fuerza Aérea
Casilla 67
Correo Aeropuerto Los Cerrillos
Santiago, Chile

(The Ministerio del Interior has ultimate authority.)

Principal Officials

Brigadier Enrique López S.
Instituto Geográfico Militar

Capitán de Navío Fernando Espinosa S.
Instituto Hidrográfico de la Armada

Comandante de Grupo Ricardo Contreras K.
Servicio Aerofotogramétrico de la Fuerza Aérea

Establishment of Agency

Established 11 October 1963, under Law No. 15.284 of 11 October 1963, Article No. 2, "The Military Geographic Institute, the Department of Navigation, and the Aerophotogrammetric Service of the Air Force, will become official authorities, on a permanent basis, representing the national government, in all matters pertaining to geography, as all decisions made by the Chief of Staff of the National Defense must be coordinated, pursuant to current legislation."

Procedures of Agency

Methods and sources employed in analyzing and developing geographic names and geographic terms are described in detail in documents available from the local member of the PAIGH Committee on Geographical Terminology in Chile.

Publications

There are a number of publications dealing with names and terminology. Official maps and charts also present names that are processed by the recognized names agency.

COLOMBIA

Agency

Instituto Geográfico "Agustin Codazzi"
Carrera 30 No. 48-51
Bogotá, Colombia

(This organization acts in lieu of an official names agency. The government plans to establish such an agency.)

Principal Official

Alvaro González Fletcher, Director General

Publications

The Institute publishes maps, plans, charts, and the Geographic Dictionary of Colombia.

COSTA RICA

Agency

Comisión Costarricense de Nomenclatura
Dirección General del Instituto Geográfico Nacional
Apartado Postal 2272
San José, Costa Rica

Principal Officials

Profesora Virginia Sandoval, President
Ing. Fernando M. Rudin, Secretary
Lic. Eduardo Bedoya, Executive Secretary (División Territorial y Toponimia.)

Establishment of Agency

Established in 1965, under Law No. 3535, August 3, 1965 (modified by Decree No. 2411-C, June 19, 1972), "Commission charged with task of overseeing that public buildings and landmarks are given names representing a tribute to people or events of historical, social, or cultural significance, or which tend to perpetuate the traditional and native names of the geography of Costa Rica." The Legislative Assembly has the authority to supersede the Commission on questions of nomenclature.

Procedures of Agency

Procedures are described in Textos Legales, 2nd edition, 1975, ed. Instituto Geográfico Nacional, San José.

Publications

Announcements from the Ministry of Culture, Youth, and Sport appear in the official newspaper La Gaceta. List of toponyms, maps, and plans are also published, and are available from the Instituto Geográfico Nacional at the above address.

DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

Agency

**Instituto Cartográfico Militar
Calle 11, Numero 8
Ens. Evaristo Morales
Santo Domingo, R.D.**

Principal Officials

**Capitán de Navío Victor García Alecont
Director, Instituto Cartográfico Militar**

**Capt. Ing. José Antonio Rodríguez Mejía
Jefe División de Planeamiento y Programación, I.C.M.**

ECUADOR

Agency

Comité de Términos Geográficos del IPGH
P.O. Box 3898
Quito, Ecuador

(This organization acts in lieu of an official names agency.)

Principal Officials

Coronel Eng. César Real Robayo
Director del Departamento de Investigaciones
Escuela Politécnica del Ejército

Dr. Nelson García,
Departamento Geográfico
Instituto Geográfico Militar

Lic. Jorge Jiménez Montero
Profesor del Colegio Experimental 24 de Mayo

Publications

Boletín del IPGH produced by the Ecuadorian Section of PAIGH.

EL SALVADOR

Agency

Instituto Geográfico Nacional
"Ingeniero Pablo Arnoldo Guzmán" (o)
Avenida Juan Bertis No. 79
Ciudad Delgado, El Salvador

Instituto Geográfico Nacional
"Ingeniero Pablo Arnoldo Guzmán"
Apartado Postal (06) 247
San Salvador, El Salvador

Principal Official

Ing. Santiago Mauricio García Contreras, Director General

Publications

Publications dealing with names and terminology may be obtained from the agency. The Geographic Dictionary of El Salvador, on its second edition, has been published in two volumes.

GUATEMALA

Agency

Autoridad Nacional de Nombres Geográficos
Instituto Geográfico Militar
Avenida Las Américas 5-76
Ciudad de Guatemala 13, Guatemala

Principal Officials

Colonel Marco Rolando Asturias García Salas
Director General, Instituto Geográfico Militar

Cartógrafo Héctor Raúl Lee Silva
Executive Secretary
Autoridad Nacional de Nombres Geográficos
Av. Las Américas 5-76
Zona 13
Ciudad de Guatemala, Guatemala

Establishment of Agency

The agency was established on May 20, 1959, under Acuerdo Gubernativo 20 de Mayo de 1959.

Procedures of Agency

Procedures are defined in the Letter of Director, Instituto Geográfico Militar 22 July 1960.

Publications

There are several publications - the Diccionario Geográfico is of particular significance. The original contains more than 13,000 typewritten pages. Official maps and charts also present names that are processed by the recognized names agency. Information about these publications can be obtained from Cartógrafo Héctor Raúl Lee Silva.

HAITI

Agency

Serv. Geodesie et Cartographie
Blv. Truman-Cite L'Exposition
Port-au-Prince, Haiti

Principal Official

Eng. Raymond Oriol, Director
Serv. Geodesie et Cartographie

HONDURAS

Agency

Instituto Geográfico Nacional
Barrio La Bolsa - Comayagua
Tegucigalpa, Honduras

(The organization acts in lieu of an official names agency.)

Principal Official

Mayor de Artillería (R) y Licenciado
José Fausto Aguero Martínez, Director General,
Instituto Geográfico Nacional

Publications

Dictionary of geographic names for the
Departments of Atlántida, Cortés, and Copán.

Indexes of geographic names for the Departments of Atlántida, Cortés,
Copán, Comayagua, Francisco Morazán, Islas de la Bahía, Colón, Choluteca,
and Gracias a Dios have been published and can be obtained from the
Instituto Geográfico Nacional in the Dirección Preinserta.

MEXICO

Agency

Dirección General de Geografía
Av. Santos Dumont No. 252
Zona de Hangares "A"
Hangar No. 28
Aeropuerto Internacional de la ciudad de México
Delegación Venustiano Carranza
15620 México, D.F.

Apartado Postal 72-126
Col. Moctezuma
Delegación Venustiano Carranza
15500 México, D.F.

(This organization acts in lieu of an official names agency. The government plans to establish such an agency)

Principal Official

Lic. Néstor Duch Gary

Publications

Topographic Charts scales	1:50,000	85% of the territory published
	1:250,000	National covering
	1:1,000,000	" "
	1:4,000,000	" "

National Nomenclature - taken from the topographic chart 1:250,000

State Nomenclature - taken from the topographic chart 1:250,000

State Nomenclature - taken from the topographic chart 1:50,000

- * Catalog of Territorial Integration - 1985
- * District Division of the United States of Mexico - 1985
- * Nomenclature of district capitals and major localities of 2, 500 inhabitants
- * Dictionary of geographic terms
- * Dictionary of the names of state capitals
- * In preparation

NICARAGUA

Agency

Instituto Nicaraguense de Estudio Territoriales
Centro Cívico Camilo Ortega Saavedra
Edificio O
Pista de la Resistencia
Managua, Nicaragua

(This organization acts in lieu of an official names agency.)

Principal Officials

Dr. Alejandro Rodríguez A.
Presidente, Sección Nacional del IPGH en Nicaragua
Complejo Cívico Cdte. Camilo Ortega Saavedra
Apartado 2110
Managua, Nicaragua

Lic. Aníbal Ramírez Rodríguez
Vice-Presidente, Sección Nacional del IPGH en Nicaragua
Complejo Cívico Cdte. Camilo Ortega Saavedra
Apartado 2110
Mangua, Nicaragua

Sr. Jorge Gurdian Castellón
Secretario, Sección Nacional del IPGH en Nicaragua
Complejo Cívico Cdte. Camilo Ortega Saavedra
Apartado 2110
Mangua, Nicaragua

Publications

Publications dealing with names and terminology may be obtained from the agency.

PANAMA

Agency

Centro de Información de Nombres Geográficos
Departamento de Geografía
Universidad de Panamá
Estafeta Universitaria, Panamá

Instituto Geográfico Nacional "Tommy Guardia"
Apartado 5267
Panamá 5 Panamá

Principal Officials

Prof. Consuelo Tempone
Apartado 6428
Panamá 5, Panamá

Prof. Nydia M. Cardoze
Apartado 4397
Panamá 5, Panamá

Establishment of Agency

Established 2 June 1970, by Executive Decree No. 212 of 2 June 1970:

Publications

The Diccionario Geográfico de Panamá (three volumes completed to date) is available from Editorial Universitaria, Universidad de Panamá. Other publications are also published in accordance with the existing political-administrative division.

The second edition of the Geographic Dictionary of Panamá is ready to be published and this was done under the supervision of the Centro de Información de Nombres Geográficos del Departamento de Geografía de la Universidad de Panamá, under the direction of the Profesora Consuelo Tempone.

PARAGUAY

Agency

Ministerio del Interior
Asunción, Paraguay

(In addition, municipal authorities (Victor Haedo y Chile) en Asunción, and other cities have responsibility for geographic names.)

Principal Official

Silvia T. Corbeta
Director de Municipalidades

Establishment of Agency

It was founded by national decree when the Ministry of the Interior was created.

PERU

Agency

While there is no single official agency authorized to standardize geographic nomenclature in Perú, the following are active in the field:

Instituto Geográfico Nacional
Avenida Andrés Aramburu 1198
Lima, Perú

Sociedad Geográfica de Lima
Casilla 1176, or Jirón Puno No. 456
Lima, Perú

Principal Officials

General de Brigada Jorge Rosales Viera,
Director, Instituto Geográfico Nacional

President
Sociedad Geográfica de Lima

Establishment of Agency

The Instituto Geográfico Nacional was created in 1891 and the Sociedad Geográfica de Lima was founded in 1888.

Publications

Various official maps and documents serve to promulgate geographic names.

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Agency

U.S. Board on Geographic Names
c/o Defense Mapping Agency
Building 56, U.S. Naval Observatory
Washington, D.C. 20305 U.S.A.

Principal Officials

Mrs. Sandra H. Shaw, Chairman
Department of State
INR/RGE, Room 8742
Washington, D.C. 20520 U.S.A.

Dr. Richard R. Randall, Executive Secretary
c/o Defense Mapping Agency
Building 56, U.S. Naval Observatory
Washington, D.C. 20305 U.S.A.

Mr. Donald J. Orth
Executive Secretary for Domestic Names
c/o U.S. Geological Survey (National Center 523)
Reston, VA 22092 U.S.A.

Establishment of Agency

Established in 1890, reorganized in 1947, under U.S. Public Law 242, 80th Congress, 1947, "An Act to provide a central authority for standardizing geographic names for the purpose of eliminating duplication in standardizing such names among the Federal departments, and for other purposes."

Structure of Agency

The Board on Geographic Names consists of representatives from nine Federal departments. The work of the Board is organized by standing committees, principal among which are the Domestic Names Committee and the Foreign Names Committee, and advisory committees concerned with undersea, Antarctic, and Indian names. Research staffs are located in the U.S. Geological Survey and the Defense Mapping Agency.

Procedures of Agency

For domestic U.S. names, the Board acts to settle names conflicts or to accept (or reject) proposals for new names. Local usage is the principal factor in making decisions. For foreign names, the Board accepts names appearing in official documents; where non-roman alphabet names are concerned, transliteration systems approved by the Board are employed to convert names. For undersea and Antarctic features, the Board applies names according to stated procedures; close communications with other interested nations assure international agreement.

Publications

For domestic names, Board decisions are cited in quarterly publications, Decisions on Domestic Geographic Names in the United States, and in a new series of State Gazetteers. Foreign names and names of undersea and Antarctic features are published in gazetteers. Information about these publications is available from the Executive Secretary.

VENEZUELA

Agency

Departamento de Límites y Nombres Geográficos
División de Mapas
Dirección de Cartografía Nacional
Ministerio del Ambiente y de los Recursos Naturales Renovables
Edificio Camejo, Piso 2, Oficina 230
Caracas 1010, Venezuela

(This group acts as the official agency of Geographic Names. The integration of a group which will constitute "The National Authority in Geographic Names" is planned.

Principal Officials

Geógrafo Miguel H. Cano de los Ríos, Director,
Dirección de Cartografía Nacional

Geógrafo Ricardo Solini, Dirección de Cartografía Nacional

Antropólogo Lilly González Cirimele, Dirección de Cartografía Nacional

Telephones: 408-1711
408-1789

Dr. Adolfo Salazar Quijada
Apartado Postal 59015
Los Chaguaramos, Caracas 1041, Venezuela

Publications

1. To date, six (6) editions of Gazetteers of Geographic Names and the Geographic Dictionary of the State of Miranda, which conform to Tome 1 of the Geographic Dictionary of Venezuela, have been published.
2. The Toponymy in Venezuela, published in the Universidad Central of Venezuela.
3. Diccionario de Tierras y Aguas, 1976.
4. The Gazetteer Program for charts of scale of 1:250,000 was initiated, and is to be published in the near future.