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UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE ON THE
STANDARDIZATION OF GEOGRAPHICAL NAMES
Geneva, 4-22 September 1967
Item 9 of the provisional agenda

NATIONAL STANDARDIZATION
NATIONAL GAZETTEERS

Submitted by the Government of New Zealand*

AUTHORITY:

The New Zealand Geographic Board constituted under the New Zealand Geographic Board Act 1946 is the authority responsible for geographic names within New Zealand. The Minister of Lands is responsible for the Act.

Antarctic Territory - In 1956 Government appointed the New Zealand Geographic Board as the New Zealand Antarctic Place Names Authority.

ADDRESS:

Secretary,
New Zealand Geographic Board,
c/o Department of Lands and Survey,
P.O. Box 8003,
WELLINGTON, NEW ZEALAND.

MEMBERS:

The Surveyor-General (Chairman)
Two persons appointed as representatives of the Maori Race;
One person nominated by the New Zealand Geographical Society;
One person nominated by the Federated Mountain Clubs of New Zealand;

* Prepared by R.P. Gough, M.I.S. N.Z., Surveyor-General, Chairman, New Zealand Geographic Board.

Two persons appointed on the recommendation of the Minister of Lands;

The members of the Board, other than the Surveyor-General are appointed by the Governor-General.

POWERS AND FUNCTIONS:

By virtue of the New Zealand Geographic Board Act 1946 the powers and functions of the Board are:

(a) To adopt rules of orthography and nomenclature in respect of place names in New Zealand.

(b) To examine cases of doubtful spelling of place names in New Zealand and determine the spelling to be adopted on official maps.

(c) To investigate and determine the priority of the discovery of any geographic feature.

(d) To collect Maori place names for recording on official maps.

(e) To determine what alien place names appearing on official maps should be replaced by Maori or British names.

(f) Subject to the provisions of the Act, to investigate and determine any proposed alteration in a place name.

(g) To make inquiries and recommendations on any matter referred to it by the Minister.

The Board may assign a name to any place in New Zealand or alter certain place names.

PROCEDURES:

Whenever the Board proposes to assign or alter any name pursuant to the Act, it shall cause to be published in the Gazette a notice of its intention to do so. Any person objecting to the proposed name may lodge his objection in writing, with the Board, stating the grounds of the objection, at any time within three months of the date of publication of the notice.

The Board considers the objection and reports to the Minister of Lands who may confirm, modify or reverse the decision of the Board and his decision shall be final. If no objection is received by the Board within three months period, then the Board's decision as to the proposed name or alteration shall be final.

OFFENCES:

It is an offence for any person to publish in any book or map, any name purporting to be the name of any place, locality or natural feature, unless the name appears on any map published by the Surveyor-General or is a name approved by the Board, or unless the publication states that the name has not been approved by the Geographic Board.

HISTORICAL:

Prior to its occupation by Europeans, New Zealand was inhabited by Maoris. Their original vocabulary was limited and they had no written language. Many of the early missionaries and settlers were scholars who used their knowledge to introduce and establish consistent spelling for the Maori language which is written phonetically using the Roman alphabet.

The first recorded contacts of New Zealand by Europeans were by Abel Tasman in 1642, Captain James Cook in 1769-1770, 1772-1775 and 1776-1780 and the French explorers de Surville in 1769 and Marion du Fresne in 1772. Later in the century there were frequent visits by sealers, whalers and traders, many of whom left records and assigned place-names.

In 1840 New Zealand was proclaimed a British Crown Colony and a Survey Department with the attendant survey records was established.

In general the Maori names were retained by the early surveyors and explorers for many of the geographical features. Understandably the early Europeans did not always agree in their spelling; so many of the early records will show the same name for a feature but with a variety of spellings.

RULES AND GENERAL PRINCIPLES:

For its guidance the Board has adopted the following rules:

(a) The publishing of a name in any work which, in the opinion of the Board, is authoritative should be taken into consideration but the publishing of that name shall not necessarily establish that name.

(b) Where names have been incorrectly spelt, if not too firmly established by local usage, the correct spelling should be restored.

(c) Where the choice lies between two or more names all sanctioned by local usage then that which is most appropriate and euphonious should be accepted.

(d) The possessive form should be avoided wherever possible without destroying the euphony of the name or changing its descriptive application.

(e) The use of hyphens to connect parts of names should in most cases be avoided.

(f) Geographic names in a foreign language should be rendered in the form adopted by that country, except where there are English equivalents already fixed by usage.

(g) Where the name for a feature has been published in both Maori and English forms, both of which forms are in general use, the Board may retain both forms either of which may be used officially. However, the use of alternative names should as a general rule be discontinued.

(h) In the case of new names for alpine and other features the mountaineers or explorers first climbing, traversing or discovering such features shall have the right to submit names for the approval of the Board.

(i) The duplication of names is avoided as far as possible and particularly in the same locality.

(j) Descriptive names and Maori names appropriate to the feature are encouraged.

(k) The names of early explorers, surveyors, botanists, geologists or others connected with the locality should be used for appropriate unnamed features.

(l) Where personal names are used then surnames are preferred.

(m) No place name is allocated unless the feature can be positively identified on a map, aerial photograph or similar document.

Geographical Names in New Zealand - are written in the Roman alphabet and are derived from the English and other European languages and the Maori language.

STAFF AND MEETINGS:

The Board has a permanent secretary but utilizes survey staff from Lands and Survey Department for additional researching.

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When it is proposed to assign a new name or alter an existing name the views of the local authority in whose district the feature lies, and other interested parties and organizations are obtained by the Secretary prior to consideration by the Board.

Meetings of the Board can be held at such times as the Board or Chairman determines. Normally one meeting a year suffices to deal with Board business whilst a Recess Committee of the Board deals with urgent matters that arise between times.

GENERAL:

A name is assigned to a geographical feature to enable people either in conversation, or in writing, or in the production of maps and charts, to refer to it without ambiguity.

Most names for features in the inhabited parts of the world were allocated in the days when travel was by foot or beasts of burden and few people went far from their place of birth or knew much of the world beyond their own neighbourhood. It is understandable therefore that we frequently find in a country considerable duplications of names for minor features though this duplication decreases as the features increase in importance. In this day of increasingly rapid transport and communication and particularly for search and rescue purposes in the event of a disaster it is important that duplication of names in the same area be avoided and the size of the area will increase with the size and importance of the feature to be named.

GENERIC TERMS:

The generic terms, mount, hill, stream, creek, etc., used in place naming in New Zealand all have the same meanings as are given in any good English dictionary.

GAZETTEERS:

A gazetteer of New Zealand Place Names is in an advanced state of preparation by the Lands and Survey Department. When published this gazetteer will list place names alphabetically together with a tabulation showing latitude and longitude, grid reference, sheet numbers and name, in the New Zealand Map Series of the map on which each name appears.

Automatic Data Processing has been used extensively for recording, sorting into alphabetical order and printing of the gazetteer. Abbreviations used in its production are given in Appendix A to this document.

APPENDIX A

Abbreviations for Gazetteer

AIR	Airport, aerodrome
ANCH	Anchorage, Roads, Roadstead
BNK	Bank
BASN	Basin
BAY	Bay, Bight, Cove, Firth, Inlet
BCH	Beach
EDGE	Bridge
BORO	Borough
BIVY	Bivouac
BLDG	Building, Freezing Works, Hall, Hut
BGND	Burial Ground
CANL	Canal
CANY	Canyon
CEM	Cemetery
CHAN	Channel, Entrance
CITY	City
CLIF	Cliff
CRAG	Crag
CRTR	Crater
CULV	Culvert
DRGE	Dredge
DRN	Drain, Outfall
DSRT	Desert
FACT	Factory
FALL	Fall, Waterfall
FIOR	Fiord
FRST	Forest
FUMA	Fumarole
GLCR	Glacier
GLKS	Golf Links, Golf Course

GLLY	Gully, Gut
GORG	Gorge, Chasm
GYSR	Geyser
HARB	Harbour, Haven, Port
HEAD	Head, Headland
HOSP	Hospital
HIST	Historic site
HSTD	Homestead, Sheep Station, Station
ISLD	Island
ISTH	Isthmus
LAGN	Lagoon
LAKE	Lake, Pond, Pool, Tarn
LTH	Lighthouse
LOC	Kainga (1), Landing, Locality, Marae (2), River Bend, River Crossing
MRFM	Blowhole (coastal), Marine Rock Formation
MINE	Coal Mine, Gold Mine, Mine, Old Mine
MT	Mount
MTN	Mountain
MTNS	Mountains, Range
MBNK	Mudbank
NLT	Navigation Light
PA	Pa (3)
PARK	Domain, Park
PASS	Pass
STRA	Passage, Strait
PEAK	Peak
PEN	Peninsula
PLN	Plain
PLTN	Plantation
PLAT	Plateau
PNT	Point
PHSE	Power House
PO	Post Office
PPLN	Pipeline

QURY	Quarry
RSDG	Railway Siding
RSTN	Railway Station
RPDS	Rapids
RC	Race Course, Trotting Grounds
RDGE	Ridge, Spur
RECL	Reclamation
RESR	Reservoir
RFLE	Rifle Range
SADDLE	Col, Saddle
SBNK	Sandbank
SBRB	Suburb
SCH	College, High School, School
SHL	Shoal
SND	Sound
SPR	Spring
STRA	Strait, Reach (coastal)
STRM	Brook, Burn, Creek, Reach, River, Stream
SWMP	Swamp
TERR	Terrace
TBRG	Toll Bridge
TUNL	Tunnel
UNIV	University
VLV	Valley
VOLC	Volcano
WHF	Wharf
WKSP	Workshops
WWS	Waterworks
(1)	Kainga (Maori) village
(2)	Marae (Maori) Court yard
(3)	Pa (Maori) village
