

Twenty-second Session  
New York, 20-29 April 2004

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Item 5 of the Provisional Agenda

REPORT OF THE DIVISIONS

Report of the United Kingdom Division\*

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## REPORT OF THE UNITED KINGDOM DIVISION

Prepared by Dr D M Munro

### ORDNANCE SURVEY – THE NATIONAL MAPPING AGENCY

Established in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, Ordnance Survey (OS) is the national mapping agency for Great Britain. It operates as a Government Department, Executive Agency and Trading Fund, producing digital data products and paper maps for business, leisure, administrative and educational use covering England, Scotland and Wales.

### OS MAP AND GAZETTEER PRODUCTS

Ordnance Survey continues to improve its range of digital products and has, since 2002, added three new layers to its Digital National Framework from which the digital map of Great Britain launched in 2001, the OS Mastermap, is derived. In September 2002 the Ordnance Survey launched its OS Mastermap Address Layer which references 26 million postal addresses with a unique identifier that is cross-referenced with the existing Topography Layer. The Integrated Transport Network and Imagery Layers were subsequently unveiled in March 2003.

An electronic version of the OS place names gazetteer mentioned in the 2002 Report of the United Kingdom is now available on the Ordnance Survey website [www.ordnancesurvey.co.uk](http://www.ordnancesurvey.co.uk). Derived from the 1:50,000 Landranger map series, this place name search facility provides access to names and locational information, including County/Unitary Authority, Grid Reference and Latitude/Longitude, through *specific search* and *wider search* options. The *specific search* option locates names where the form requested is the main name or is followed by a descriptor. For example, a *specific search* for Balgonie will yield three locations - Balgonie, Balgonie Cott and Balgonie South Parks. A *wider search* will, in addition, identify Coaltown of Balgonie and Milton of Balgonie. The location of the name selected can be viewed using the Get-a-Map facility which is accessed by clicking on the place name in the first column.

### OS NAMES POLICY

Ordnance Survey names information is updated in the course of map product revision in consultation with local authorities, reliable organisations and expert individuals. Since 2000, particular emphasis has been placed on standardising Welsh names in Wales and Gaelic names in the Gaelic-speaking areas of north-west Scotland. A *Gaelic Names Policy* and *Ordnance Survey Welsh Language Scheme* were approved in 2000 and 2001 respectively.

In Wales, the search for original name forms has resulted in changes to the OS place names database that have been agreed with local government authorities. For example, Dolgelley in Gwynedd is now Dolgellau and Caernarvon, also in Gwynedd, is now Caernarfon. It should be noted that in Welsh, *ch* and *ll* are treated as digraphs as in the name Machynlleth.

In Scotland, the Ordnance Survey is carrying out a pilot survey in 2004 to assess the amount of work required to undertake appropriate changes to Gaelic names in the highlands and islands where names on OS map products are inconsistent or do not reflect current usage. Experts will review names taken from ten per cent of the area where Gaelic names predominate and the policy will be to adopt Gaelic Orthographic Conventions agreed as best practice by a sub-committee of the Scottish Certificate of Education Examination Board in 1981. The only modification to these conventions relates to the use of diacritics, both grave and acute accents having been used in the past. It has been agreed that the acute accent will no longer be used in Ordnance Survey Gaelic place name mapping. The programme for the revision of Gaelic place names in future years will be based on the outcome of this sample survey.