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THIRD UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE ON THE
STANDARDIZATION OF GEOGRAPHICAL NAMES
Athens, 17 August-7 September 1977
Item 7 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 Second United Nations
Conference on the Standardization of
Geographical Names

REPORT BY AUSTRALIA*

Paper presented by Australia

* Prepared by the Division of National Mapping, Canberra, A.C.T., Australia.

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

However, the Division of National Mapping has produced a gazetteer of all names taken from the series of 541 maps which cover Australia at 1:250 000 scale. Not all of these names have been approved by the responsible State or Territory, and they are subject to change.

Each State (New South Wales, Queensland, South Australia, Tasmania, Victoria 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 NEW SOUTH WALES

Authority: Geographical Names Board of New South Wales,
GPO Box 39,
Sydney, 2001
Australia

Activities: The major function of the Board at the present time is the collection and review of place names within the State and the preparation of a register of such names. In carrying out this function the Board is working in close cooperation with the State's mapping authority which is currently engaged in an active program to map the State at scales of 1:25 000, 1:50 000 and 1:100 000. A preview is made of the provisional maps and all place names are the subject of a nomenclature check to eliminate anomalies. Each map is finally published with a footnote, "Place names on this map are approved geographical names under the provisions of the Geographical Names Act, 1966". To date about 55,000 place names have been formally assigned and indexed.

In addition to the normal review of place names, the Board makes decisions on the many miscellaneous applications received involving the naming of unnamed features. The majority of these applications are received from local government authorities and involves the naming of parks, reserves, suburbs, etc. Again, a considerable number of applications are received from the State's Education Department as the naming of all public schools is a matter for final decision by the Board. Over and above this, many enquiries of a varied nature are received seeking information on place names generally.

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To date little or no research has been carried out into the origin and history of the place names assigned, although endeavours are being made to have qualified persons appointed for this purpose. Likewise, the Board has not yet been successful in having an automatic data processing program introduced although action is in progress.

STATE OF QUEENSLAND

Authority: The Queensland Place Names Board,
Office of the Surveyor General,
127 Creek Street, Brisbane 4000
Australia

Activities: During the period under review, the Board approved 355 place names. These included 171 suburbs and 40 localities of the City of Brisbane. The defining and naming of the suburbs of the City of Brisbane, undertaken at the request of the Brisbane City Council, took three years to complete.

The Board has compiled a gazetteer of approximately 58,000 place names in the State. These were previously listed on indexed cards and form a complete list of all place names appearing on official maps, i.e. maps published by the Surveyor General. Information on the origins of place names is included in the gazetteer under the relevant entry. Because of incomplete records, such information is included for only a small proportion of the 58,000 names. It is intended to produce an additional gazetteer of unofficial place names, i.e. those place names which appear on 1:100 000 topographical maps published by authorities other than the Surveyor General. Provisional approval only has so far been given to these names.

STATE OF TASMANIA

Authority: The Nomenclature Board of Tasmania,
Lands Department,
134 Macquarie Street,
Hobart, 7001
Australia

Activities: The Board has continued to be primarily engaged in the consideration of names for the 1:100 000 series; this mapping is approximately 90% complete at this stage. In addition there have been numerous additions and some anomalies concerning nomenclature for subsequent editions of this series since 1972, with which the Board has dealt.

The production of a Tasmanian gazetteer is well advanced.

STATE OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA

Authority: Geographical Names Board of South Australia,
Department of Lands,
GPO Box 293A,
Adelaide, 5001
Australia

Activities: Apart from the administration of the Geographical Names Act, which was described in the report to the last conference, little progress has been made. The Board is presently endeavouring to have staff appointed to commence the compilation of a gazetteer required under the Act.

STATE OF VICTORIA

Authority: Office of the Place Names Committee,
Department of Crown Lands and Survey,
State Public Offices,
Melbourne, 3002
Australia

Activities: To date the Committee has compiled a register of approximately 16,000 place names in the State. In conformity with modern mapping and recording practices the use of an apostrophe in the spelling of place names is avoided.

Historical research on the origins of place names is done by the Central Plan Office, Department of Crown Lands and Survey, and by the Royal Historical Society of Victoria. On occasions other authorities and representative groups submit historical information on request. All place names of proven aboriginal derivation are, as far as possible, retained in as authentic a form as possible.

STATE OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA

Authority: Nomenclature Advisory Committee,
C/- Department of Lands and Surveys,
Perth, 6000
Australia

Activities: Primarily the approval of names in connection with topographic mapping projects.

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AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

Authority: Canberra National Memorials Committee,
PO Box 158,
Canberra City, 2601
Australia

Activities: The National Memorials Ordinance provides for the naming of streets, suburbs and public places within the A.C.T. but there is no legislation at this stage covering the naming of geographical or topographical features.

Legislation is being drafted to overcome this deficiency and it is anticipated that a draft Geographical Names Ordinance could be ready for consideration by interested parties by mid-1977.

NORTHERN TERRITORY

Authority: Place Names Committee,
Australian Survey Office,
PO Box 927,
Darwin, 5794
Australia

Activities: The Place Names Committee investigates and recommends to the Administrator names for public places and natural features. During the period 1972-1977 the Committee has investigated a large number of place names in support of the topographic mapping and charting activities in the Northern Territory. The names on all new maps are checked by the Committee before publication.

ANTARCTICA

Authority: Antarctic Names Committee of Australia,
C/- Antarctic Division,
Department of Science,
568 St Kilda Road,
Melbourne, 3004
Australia

Activities: During the period 1972-1977, the Antarctic Names Committee of Australia met four times and also carried out work by correspondence between the Secretary and members.

The Committee was reconstituted in May 1975.

The Committee accepted a number of names appearing on maps published by the Ministry of the Merchant Fleet of the USSR, the New Zealand Department of Lands and Survey, the United States Geological Survey and the Atlas of Parts of the Antarctic Coastal Lands by H.E. Hansen, published

in Oslo in 1946. The Committee also approved a number of new names for features explored by the Australian National Antarctic Research Expeditions in Enderby Land; in the Prince Charles Mountains, Mac.Robertson Land; and in the Vestfold Hills, Princess Elizabeth Land.

The Committee agreed to adopt the modified Hepburn system for the Romanisation of Japanese place names and to use diacritical marks when they occurred in foreign names.

The Secretary prepared four papers, ANCA Papers 76/1, 76/2, 76/3 and 76/4, listing the Committee's decisions, which await ratification by the Minister for Science, the Minister to whom the Committee is responsible.

Names approved by the Committee were indexed by computer according to the following categories:

- i) Alphabetical
- ii) ANCA Paper number
- iii) 1:250 000 map sheet
- iv) Nation of origin.
