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**Eighth United Nations Conference on the
Standardization of Geographical Names**
Berlin, 27 August-5 September 2002
Item 4 of the provisional agenda*
**Reports by Governments on the situation in their
countries and on the progress made in the
standardization of geographical names since
the Seventh Conference**

Report for Australia

Submitted by Australia**

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 * E/CONF.94/1.
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REPORT FOR AUSTRALIA

COMMITTEE FOR GEOGRAPHICAL NAMES IN AUSTRALASIA

The Committee for Geographical Names in Australasia (CGNA) was formed in 1984 to provide a coordinating role in Australian place naming activities. CGNA was established within the Inter Governmental Committee on Survey and Mapping (ICSM) in 1993 with the support of the National Mapping Division of Geoscience Australia. Representation on CGNA comes from the Australian State / Territory Geographical Names Boards, New Zealand and other organisations with an interest in nomenclature. In 1998 New Zealand was formally welcomed as a full participating member of CGNA and the Committee became the "Committee for Geographical Names in Australasia". Macquarie University also joined CGNA in 1999 to help foster a strong working relationship during the development of the National Place Names Project. The national program and goals of CGNA have been established by the adoption of the following strategic plan which also outlines CGNA's achievements and future issues and problems.

CGNA STRATEGIC PLAN

Mission
As the focus group for Australia and New Zealand, our mission is to co-ordinate and communicate the consistent use of geographical place names, to best meet the requirements of the community as a whole.

CGNA Issues:
- Lack of community awareness about geographical names protocols and the name registration process
- The inability for on going contribution to and participation in international toponymic forums.
- Dual Naming (implementation and education)
- Geographic names as Internet Domain Names toponymic issues.
- The use of geographic names in Trade Marking (Intellectual Property)
- Use of incorrect names by Map/Spatial Database producers

Goals of the CGNA by 2003:
- Greater community awareness of geographic names
- Develop and deliver an educational program to promote the significance of geographic placenames in the community
- The development of National guidelines for geographic place names
- The promotion of National guidelines for geographic place names to each jurisdiction.
- To develop guidelines on:
1. Dual Naming

2. Second Level Domain Names (2LD)
3. Trade Marking
4. Defining a feature's extent

- Broad recognition of CGNA's role as the Australian New Zealand focus group on geographic placename issues.
- Adoption of correct names in map production and spatial databases
- To promote the use of correct names by Map/Spatial database producers
- The adoption of the national ASDI compliant Data Model for geographic place names

Actions:

- Develop and deliver an educational program to promote the significance of geographic placenames in the community
- Finalise video proposal and submit
- Appoint sub committee to develop the educational program
- The promotion of National guidelines for geographic place names to each jurisdiction.
- All Guidelines to be presented to jurisdictions
- To develop new guidelines on:
  - Dual Naming
  - 2LD
  - Trade Marking
  - Defining a named feature's extent
  - To promote the use of correct names by Map, charts/Spatial Database producer*s*

CGNA's Role in 5+ Years

CGNA will continue to be active in developing and promoting nationally consistent standards, policies and procedures dealing with the following emerging trends/issues.

Emerging Trends/Issues

1 **Expanding Use of Placenames by Community**
   - Geographic Names as 2LD's will be in place
   - Dual Names will be implemented to some degree – probable overlap with Aboriginal Sites Registers
   - Australian National Placenames Survey (ANPS) gaining momentum, including greater community input.

2 **Data Quality/Accessibility**
   - More user input to database, ie, contributions by community groups
   - Data more accessible via "Web Friendly" mechanisms
   - Definition of spatial extent of unbounded features, ie, where does Mt Kosciuszko start/finish?

- Locality Boundaries will need to be aligned with other datasets, ie, Australia Post (AP), Census to create spatial hierarchy.
- Improved co-ordinates on placenames for navigation purposes.

3 **Conflict Between Community/Commercial Use of Placenames**
- Trademarking for wine, food, etc.
- Use of Geographic Names in .com.au Domain
- Thematic routes
- and estate names

Where are we (CGNA) now?

- Nationally consistent approach on most issues.
- Low level of promotion on use of placenames by community
- No endorsed policy for Geographic Names as 2LD's. Court action over trademarking issues.
- Dual Naming (nationally) still developing
- High "manual" data access, however web usage and access to registers increasing, eg, NSW Register 4000 hits/month; estimate 10000/month by 2006.
- Data quality currently still inconsistent with errors but improving through data scrubbing and evolution of National Gazetteer.
- Incomplete national coverage of suburb boundaries, ie, NSW 80% complete, expect completion (substantial) by 2004.
- No national roadnames database as supporting component for national address file and community asset.

What are the Gaps from Present to 5 Years+?

- CGNA will need to develop policies which are supported nationally by ICSM, Australia New Zealand Land Information Council (ANZLIC) and Government.
- Video promoting/raising public awareness needs concerted distribution effort.
- Spatial Data Infrastructure (SDI) Data Model needs national commitment for adoption.
- Need improved interaction with Australia Post, Australian Bureau of Statistics re: data alignment, invite to CGNA as observers/participants.
- Continue/expand strategic alliances with other stakeholders involved with Geographic naming policy, ie, ANPS, Local Government (peak body).
- CGNA/ICSM will need to become more active in supporting jurisdictions in Aboriginal placenames/reconciliation initiatives.
- Toponymic training course for SE Asia UNGEGN members (supported principally by ANPS) scheduled for Bathurst in 2004.

- CGNA needs to retain international links to UNGEGN, promoting Dual Names and Domain naming initiatives to broader community.
- CGNA needs to facilitate National Road Names Database.

CONCLUSION

CGNA is an effective geographical names coordinating body for Australia. The authority for naming in Australia remains with the state and territory names authorities who are the responsible body in the relevant areas, but this system works well. CGNA has been able to develop guidelines for a number of issues and in almost all instances CGNA members agencies have adopted and are using these guidelines. Some of the guidelines developed by CGNA, and issues faced by CGNA are the subject of other papers at this conference.

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