

Department of Lands

Land Administration & Management
Property & Spatial Information



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The Hon Tony Kelly MLC
Minister for Lands
Level 34
Governor Macquarie Tower
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Sydney NSW 2000

Dear Minister

In accordance with the *Surveying Act 2002*, the Board of Surveying and Spatial Information submits the following report for the 2003/2004 financial year.

This report has been prepared in accordance with the *Annual Reports (Statutory Bodies) Act 1984* and the *Public Finance and Audit Act 1983*.

I commend this report to you.

Yours sincerely

Warwick Watkins
President of the Board of Surveying and Spatial Information
Surveyor General of New South Wales
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The Board of Surveying and Spatial Information

The Board of Surveying and Spatial Information (the Board), constituted under the *Surveying Act 2002* to provide for the registration of land and mining surveyors, is the statutory body responsible for standards in surveying and spatial information in New South Wales and advises the Minister on spatial information. The Board, on 25 June 2003, took over the functions previously managed by the Board of Surveyors of New South Wales which was constituted under the *Surveyors Act 1929*, which has been repealed.

Functions of the Board

The principal functions of the Board are:

- the registration of land and mining surveyors;
- the investigation of surveyor's licensing schemes in other States and Territories, and the provision of advice to the Minister in connection with the recognition of the qualifications and experience of surveyors registered or licensed under such schemes;
- the investigation of complaints against registered land and mining surveyors;
- the taking of disciplinary action against registered land and mining surveyors;
- the investigation of matters referred to it by the Minister for advice or report in relation to surveying or any other aspect of the spatial information industry;
- the investigation of, and the provision of advice to the Minister with respect to, the practice to be followed in the conduct of surveys or in the collection, collation and dissemination of any other kinds of spatial information; and
- the provision of advice to the Minister with respect to any other matter in connection with the administration of this Act.

Other functions of the Board include:

- the monitoring of Acts and Regulations concerning matters which are related to, or form part of, surveying;
- the maintenance of reciprocal arrangements for registered surveyors between the States and Territories of Australia and with New Zealand;
- the monitoring of trends in surveying in the States, Territories and New Zealand;

- the maintenance of acceptable levels of assessment of the ability and competence of persons seeking registration, to service the community's needs in surveying;
- the maintenance of liaison with the surveying profession in monitoring the performance, training and continuing professional development and education of surveyors;
- advice to the Surveyor General on matters concerning the State Control Survey and surveying generally;
- the sponsoring of workshops and seminars on topics and issues which affect the profession and the community;
- assistance in the development of educational and training programs to achieve the highest level of academic standard and professional competence; and
- any other functions as are conferred or imposed on it by or under this or any other Act or law.

Aims and Objectives

- to maintain the register of registered land and mining surveyors.
- to grant registration to surveyors under the provisions of the *Surveying Act 2002* if:
 - (a) they hold a prescribed qualification
 - (b) they satisfy the Board, at prescribed examinations conducted by the Board, that they are fit to practice; and
 - (c) they satisfy the Board that they are registered as a land surveyors in another prescribed State or Territory of Australia or within New Zealand.
- to investigate the conduct of a registered land or mining surveyor where a complaint is received.
- to define the scope of spatial information, identify key spatial industry stakeholders, develop communication and promotion strategies and benefits for the Board, the public and private sectors.
- to identify a vision for spatial information.
- to develop policies, assess and recommend quality standards for collection, collation, management and dissemination of all identified types of spatial information relevant to the NSW SDI.
- to formulate procedures for the evaluation of data.
- to set minimum competency standards for collection, collation and dissemination of spatial information.

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- to promote quality management procedures for spatial information.
- to encourage SI practitioners to undertake appropriate education and relevant continuing professional development to maintain competency.
- to identify suitable skilled resources for the evaluation of matters referred by the Minister.

Membership, Board of Surveying and Spatial Information

There are between ten and twelve members on the Board as defined by the *Surveying Act 2002*, two advisers to the Board and one observer. The Registrar also attends Board meetings. During the reporting year the Board met formally on eight occasions. Meetings were held in Sydney, Broken Hill, Mudgee, and Kurri Kurri to enable the Board to be more accessible to the surveying profession. At each of the country meetings the Board was able to meet with surveyors from nearby regions.

Member	Role	Meetings
Mr Warwick Watkins AMP:ISMP (Harv), M NatRes, DipScAgr, HDA (Hons)	Surveyor General of NSW	8
Mr Paul Harcombe B Surv (UNSW), M Geom (Melb)	Chief Surveyor Department of Lands	9
Mr Colin Weatherby TCP Dip (Sydney)	nominee Institute of Surveyors NSW Inc	8
Mr Mark Gordon B Surv (Hons)	nominee of Institute of Surveyors NSW Inc	9
Mr Andrew Campbell M SurvSc (UNSW), M Planning (UTS)	nominee Institute of Surveyors NSW Inc	9
Mr Phillip Orr B Surv (Hons)	nominee of Australian Institute of Mine Surveyors Limited (AIMS)	8
Mr Richard Bartholomew B Land Management (Sydney), Eng Survey Cert, Land & Eng Survey Cert	nominee of Australasian Urban Regional Information Systems Association (AURISA) - NSW Chapter	8
Mr Robert Regan B Mining Engineering (Hons 1)	nominee of Minister for Mineral Resources	8
Mr David Bruce B Surv (Hons) (UNSW)	nominee of Australasian Urban Regional Information Systems Association (AURISA) - NSW Chapter	7
Mr Colin Mitford Surv Cert	nominee of Australasian Urban Regional Information Systems Association (AURISA) - NSW Chapter	8
Ms Margaret Hole AM, Diploma in Law, Barristers Admission Board	nominee of the Minister for Fair Trading	6
Professor John Fryer FISA, B Surv (UNSW), PhD (UNSW)	nominee of the University of Newcastle	8
Ms Anna Allen M Surv Sc (UNSW), B Eng Surv (Pol)	adviser to the Board	7
Mr Grahame Wallis B Surv (UNSW)	adviser to the Board - cadastral surveying matters	9
Mr David Dobson Adv Dip Acc (CIT), Registered Surveyor, ACT Commissioner for Surveys	observer at meetings	4
Mr Graham Leatherland RFD•, Cart Cert, HCart Cert	Registrar	9

Administration

Administrative support to the Board is undertaken by a small secretariat which includes the Registrar, one full time statutory assistant and one part time statutory officer. Employees of the former Department of Information Technology and Management now Department of Lands provide further support.

The Board is primarily funded by fees levied on surveyors and also some contributions from spatial information stakeholders. All costs associated with administration of the Board were met from fees received.

Review of operations

The Board's responsibilities include:

Qualifications

- Keep a register of names of persons registered as surveyors, their addresses and qualifications.
- Register surveyors by Certificate of Competency awarded by the Board, and under the terms of reciprocity which exist between States and Territories of Australia and New Zealand.
- Issue Letters of Accreditation to Reciprocating Boards for Land Surveyors.
- Remove names from the Register of Surveyors.
- Restore names to the Register of Surveyors.
- Assess overseas and interstate academic qualifications for persons wishing to practice surveying in New South Wales.
- Receive and investigate reports and complaints concerning the competence of surveyors.

Education

- Enrol Surveyor's Assistants, Survey Drafters and Students of Surveying to the Board and keep a list of the names and addresses of enrolled persons in these categories.
- Determine, record and accept accrued practical experience obtained by Surveyor's Assistants who are Candidate Surveyors.
- Assist Candidate Surveyors with the Board by issuing advice regarding:
 - depth and scope of professional competence expected of persons seeking registration
 - conducting workshops
- Supply relevant information to professional bodies

including the Institution of Surveyors NSW Inc and the NSW Division of the Australian Institute of Mine Surveyors.

- Advise on education matters as a member of the University of New South Wales' Advisory Board, through direct interaction with the academic sector's nominee to the Board and through interaction with the profession.

Examination

- Conduct examinations, assess Professional Training Agreement (PTA) reports and issue Certificates of Competency for both Land and Mining Surveyors.
- Publish information regarding prescribed examinations in the Board's website and Government Gazette.

Legislation Requirements

- Publish each year, a list of persons who are registered as surveyors under the provisions of the *Surveying Act 2002*.
- Prepare and issue up-to-date copies and variations to the Register to Government Departments by arrangement.

Continuing Professional Development

Maintaining a scheme of compulsory continuing professional development for Registered Surveyors in New South Wales in conjunction with the survey industry.

Achievements

The Board of Surveying and Spatial Information was active in its continuing role of promoting professional development and standards and has played a significant role in legislative reform following the enactment of the Surveying Bill on 25 June 2003.

The Board continued its practice of meeting and consulting with Surveyor Board representatives from interstate and overseas jurisdictions. The Board also met with the Commissioner for Surveys, ACT to further advance cooperative arrangements implemented five years ago.

During the reporting year meetings were held with representative members from NSW professional associations to ensure that both Land and Mining Surveyors fulfil their responsibilities to consumers.

The Board commenced the preparation of a new strategic plan including stakeholders input and expects to have a final agreed document by the end of 2004.

Qualifications

The Board maintained the Register of Surveyors. The Register contains the names of registered surveyors who are considered competent by the Board to perform land and mining surveys in New South Wales. Arrangements with Surveyor's Boards or other competent authority from other countries (New Zealand and other States and Territories of Australia) enable land surveyors with appropriate qualifications and experience to be registered in this state. These reciprocal arrangements are in accordance with Trans-Tasman Mutual Recognition (NSW) Act 1996 and National Competition Policy Principles.

Education

The "Board of Surveyors Medal" is presented to the most successful student in the final year of the Bachelor of Surveying and Spatial Information Systems degree course or the Bachelor of Surveying degree course. This year's awards were presented to Lee Schmalfeldt, from the University of New South Wales and Michael Heathwood, from the University of Newcastle.

Examination

The Board met for a total of six working days during September 2003 and March 2004 for the purpose of assessing the professional competence of graduate surveyors through examinations. The Board also assessed Candidate Surveyors undertaking Professional Training Agreement (PTAs). A total of eighteen applicants successfully completed the examinations or PTA, were issued with Certificates of Competency and accordingly registered as Land Surveyors. One Candidate Surveyor was registered as a Mining Surveyor.

Based on the results of the Board's assessment for Certificates of Competency four prizes are awarded annually.

- The "Barr Prize" was presented to Jamie Boswell for the best cadastral survey project
- The "Harvey Prize" was presented to Brian Blight for the best town planning project
- The "Augustus Alt Prize" was presented to Geoffrey Hill for the best engineering project
- The "Neil Ryan Memorial Award" was presented to Christopher Leach and Leigh Bridges for the best urban cadastral projects submitted at the September 2003 and March 2004 assessments.

The Surveyor General's Prize was awarded to Stephen Mitchell for his performance in a Professional Training Agreement completed during the year.

Professional Training Agreements

The Board introduced Professional Training Agreements (PTA) as an alternative method of assessment of the competency of Candidate Surveyors. There are 22 Candidate Land Surveyors currently undertaking training under Professional Training Agreements to ascertain competency as a Land Surveyor.

The Board is to develop a PTA for Candidate Mining Surveyors.

Candidate Training

To assist Surveyor's Assistants attempting assessment the Board conducts a weekend workshop at Kurri Kurri TAFE. This year 38 Surveyor's Assistants and 7 supervising surveyors attended. Board members, invited guests, local surveyors and Surveyor's Assistants attending the workshop were able to discuss matters of mutual interest including proposed changes to Board operations affecting both land and mining surveying industries.

The Board continued to improve and expand the information available at the workshop. Comprehensive manuals, produced by the Board, for the urban cadastral, town planning, engineering design and supervision components of the urban development process were distributed. The set Town Planning project, an alternative to a Candidate Surveyor's own project, was also made available on CD ROM. These resources and the information sessions provided by guest presenters have proved to be valuable to Candidates.

Legislation

The Surveying Bill was enacted on 25 June 2003, and the statutory body with the corporate name "Board of Surveying and Spatial Information" (BOSSI) was constituted. The Surveying (Practice) Amendment Regulation was also implemented on 25 June 2003.

One of the key recommendations of the NCP Review, endorsed by Cabinet and embodied in the above legislation was that membership of the Board be expanded to include representatives of Government, the survey profession, consumers and other professional groups having an interest in survey and spatial information. This recommendation has been implemented and can be seen in the present composition of the Board.

During the year a number of transition issues with the legislation emerged concerning the composition of the Board and its committees; deceased surveyors and liability of Board members which are being investigated with a view that some minor amendments will be proposed for consideration by Government.

Continuing Professional Development

The revised CPD Policy issued in 2003 by the Board has been implemented and was a condition of renewal of registration due at the end of the financial year. The Board's CPD Policy is located on the BOSSI internet site and can be found at www.bossi.nsw.gov.au. Compliance with the Board's CPD requirements is mandatory for surveyors renewing their registration.

The Board has ratified the following four organisations for CPD purposes which include the conduct and assessment of CPD activities and issue of CPD compliance certificates:

- Institution of Surveyors NSW Inc
- Association of Consulting Surveyors NSW
- Australian Institution of Mine Surveyors Limited NSW Division
- University of Newcastle.

A CPD Committee has been formed by the Board and is comprised of Board members and representatives from the four organisations ratified by the Board. Reporting to the Committee is the CPD Audit Panel, which undertakes an audit of CPD compliance involving 20% of surveyors renewing their annual registration in accordance with the policy. 197 surveyors were audited this year and 22 of these were deemed not to have complied with the Policy by the Audit Panel.

Committees

To maximise the use of the time available at Board meetings the Board has appointed the following committees to operate within the Board’s structure:

Training Committee, Finance and Audit Committee, Spatial Information Committee, Professional Audit and Investigation Committee, Discipline Committee, Mining Surveyor Committee, and Legislation Committee. The latter committee meets on an “ad hoc” basis.

It is anticipated that further committees will be formed to deal with the expanded role of the Board under the *Surveying Act 2002*.

Consumer Response

On the recommendation of the Director General of the Department of Fair Trading, Ms Margaret Hole was appointed as a member of the Board in the role of consumer representative. Ms Hole currently occupies the position of Chair of the Minister for Fair Trading’s Property Advisory Council, and is also a member of the Fair Trading Advisory Council.

During the reporting year the Registrar received more than 50 telephone complaints related to the performance of surveyors. All telephone inquiries were responded to within 24 hours. Written applications received a reply within six to eight weeks due to the frequency of Board meetings but any urgent matters were dealt with out of session.

In accordance with the Board’s Complaints Policy, the Professional Audit and Investigation Committee investigates complaints against surveyors. The Policy is located on the BOSSI internet site at www.bossi.nsw.gov.au.

Two complaints against surveyors this year were fully investigated by the Committee and were subsequently referred to the Disciplinary Committee for disciplinary action against the surveyors involved. One complaint was resolved by mediation and another was deemed not to be within the Board’s jurisdiction. There are three complaints currently being investigated by the Committee.

The Committee has developed a standard ‘Complaints Form’ template to facilitate the making of complaints by members of the public.

The successful use of complaint resolution methods by the Board has resulted in few formal complaints.

Government Action Plan for Women

The Board has continued to sponsor the Surveyor General’s Women in Surveying Scholarship at both the University of Newcastle and the University of New South Wales. The Board uses the scholarship to encourage women to enter the surveying profession. This year scholarships were awarded to Selin Ozdemir who was enrolled in her first year of studies for the Bachelor’s degree in Surveying and Spatial Information Systems at the University of New South Wales. There was no suitable applicant enrolled in the Bachelor of Surveying course at the University of Newcastle and, on recommendation from the University, funding for the scholarship was used to assist women surveying students

Grants to Non-Government Organisations

During the reporting year the Board granted \$2000 to the University of Newcastle and granted \$2000 to the University of New South Wales for the Surveyor General’s Women in Surveying Scholarship and women surveying student assistance.

Payments Performance

The Board’s performance payment details are combined with those of the Department of Lands and are contained in the Department’s Annual Report appendices.

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Risk Management and Insurance

The Board's insurance activities are conducted through the NSW Treasury Managed Fund Scheme of self insurance for government agencies.

For all other administrative procedures, policies and processes for this report please refer to the Department of Lands Annual Report Appendices.

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Facts and Figures	2001/02	2002/03	2003/04
Registered Surveyors in NSW	1005	998	1083
New registrations			
By way of Certificate of Competency	14	20	126
By way of Letters of Accreditation from Reciprocating Boards	9	17	13
Removal of Name from Register			
Non-payment of Annual Roll fees	26	18	127
At own Request	15	33	24
Deceased	0	2	2
Restoration of Name to Register	22	19	102
Letter of Accreditation Issued to Reciprocating Boards	3	8	9
Charges Against Surveyors	0	1	0
Candidate Enrolments 2001/2002	29	33	44
Total Financial Candidates as at 30 June 2002	137	143	142
Assessment of Overseas Academic Qualifications	9	4	7
Assessment of Interstate Academic Qualifications	0	0	0
Emeritus Certificates Awarded	20	24	17
Survey Areas Approved for Proclamation	0	0	0