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DON'T BE A WEED SPREADER THIS SUMMER

Public support is being enlisted in the battle to control *Lagarosiphon major*, the invasive water weed that is choking the shallows of some of the South Island's most popular lakes.

Left: What we don't want to see in other lakes – this aerial view shows how serious the weed problem has become in Lake Wanaka. (The dark sections around the edges of the lake contain weed).

Below: Detail from the educational material used last summer.



LINZ has again joined forces this year with the Department of Conservation, Environment Southland, Environment Canterbury and Meridian Energy to alert boaties to the dangers of inadvertently spreading *Lagarosiphon major* to previously uninfested waterways.

The weed spreads very easily. It can last out of water for up to 20 hours, and a single piece just a few centimetres long caught on a boat trailer or anchor is all that it can take to start a new outbreak. Lakes Wanaka, Dunstan and Roxburgh are already heavily infested, and the first outbreak of the weed in the Waitaki lakes was reported in Lake Benmore early last year.

David Morgan, Contract Manager for LINZ, says while the infestations are the subject of intensive control programmes, the weed is virtually impossible to eradicate once established. Ongoing control is expensive and, more importantly, each bed of *Lagarosiphon* is a potential source of new outbreaks.

A public education campaign is being co-ordinated by LINZ to alert the people who are most likely to accidentally spread the weed – the boaties and anglers who use the southern lakes and rivers.

The campaign will concentrate on South Canterbury/North Otago and some of the Southland lakes. With the earlier discovery of the weed in Lake Benmore, visitors to the Waitaki Lakes have received special attention, given the heightened risk of spreading the weed within that area.

The campaign is urging boaties to ensure any weed is cleaned off the boat's hull, motor, trailer and jet intake, as well as any ski or fishing gear.

As well as the many thousands of leaflets and bumper stickers, the campaign has produced samples of the weed, safely entombed in clear plastic resin blocks, as effective visual aids to remind boaties of what 'the enemy' looks like.

The campaign has been supplemented by surveys to assess levels of awareness among boaties. Only about a third of those interviewed could identify the weed when shown, but around two-thirds knew about the need to ensure boats and equipment are clear of any weed before leaving the boat ramp area. The survey also revealed that a large majority of recreational boaties interviewed appreciated that the weed was a serious pest.

Following the success of last year's campaign, a renewed education programme run by JD Bell and Associates is getting into swing for the summer of 2004-05.

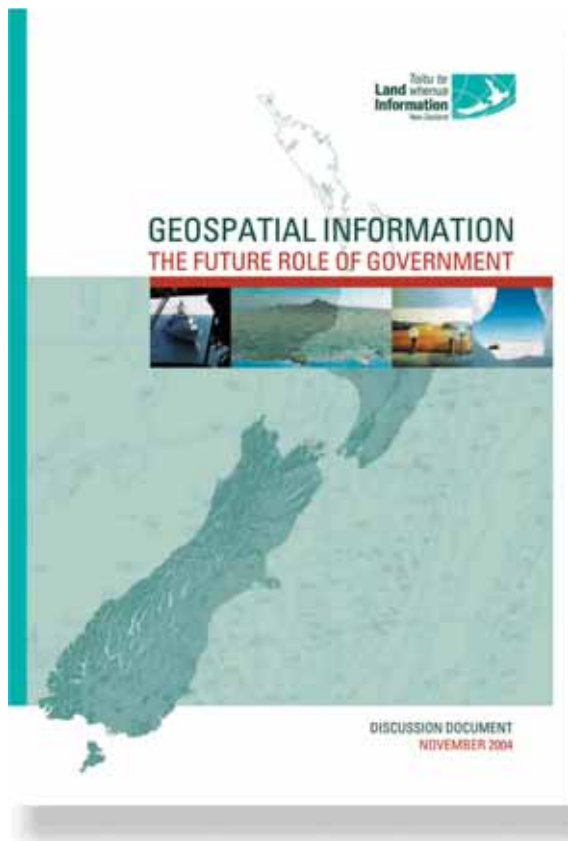
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GEOSPATIAL WORKSHOPS CRYSTALLISE ISSUES

A series of workshops on the future role of government in geospatial information has built a much richer picture of stakeholders' attitudes, says Jerome Sheppard, Project Manager, Geospatial Information.



At a glance

- ◆ A discussion paper on the future role of government in geospatial information was released in October.
- ◆ A series of workshops has been held to tease out the issues raised in the paper and feed in to the submission process.
- ◆ Submissions closed on 17 December, and a draft geospatial strategy is expected to be available by March 2005.

The workshops – held in Dunedin, Christchurch, Wellington and Auckland in late November and early December – followed on from the release in October of the discussion document, *Geospatial Information – The Future Role of Government* (see *Landscan* October 2004).

Jerome says the Government has recognised the strategic importance of geospatial information and the way that it is managed and accessed in future. “Individuals attending the workshops have represented a wide range of different organisations. We’ve had participation from across central and local government, territorial local authorities and private sector organisations. All expressed their views on the future role of government with regard to geospatial information.”

The workshops have provided some useful context for debate about geospatial information, and have helped participants to formulate their submissions, he adds.

“Some strong themes are emerging, and these are lining up fairly well with the issues identified in the discussion document. One of the most common discussion points was around the need for trustworthy and accurate sources of geospatial information. Participants at the various workshops have also expressed strong support for the concept of a centralised portal for accessing this type of information, and strong recognition of LINZ’s leadership in this area.

“The feedback received through the workshops has provided LINZ with a richer understanding of the differing needs of those involved or interested in government’s geospatial resources, which will greatly assist the development of the finalised strategy.”

Submissions to LINZ on the questions raised in the discussion paper closed on 17 December. Jerome says a summary of the submissions will be circulated in January and a draft geospatial strategy should be available for consultation by March.

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NEW CHIEF INFORMATION OFFICER GIVING SHAPE TO IT FUTURE

Tony Lester didn't have the most auspicious start to his new job. A lawn-mowing accident on his large section left some nasty lacerations – sturdy footwear prevented more serious injury – and LINZ's Chief Information Officer has spent the first month of his tenure cooling his heels as he recuperated.

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But the waiting is now over. Although it'll be a little while before he's back jogging, Tony is now immersed in his new role and very enthusiastic about the information technology (IT) platform for meeting LINZ's e-Delivery strategic goal.

He comes to LINZ after 34 years with Inland Revenue (IRD), most recently as the Department's National Manager IT. While he protests that he's a tax man at heart, and not a technical expert, his track record at IRD reveals that he knows a thing or two about shaping IT systems.

In 1988 he came to Wellington on secondment to help develop an information systems plan for IRD. Working with Andersen Consulting and senior management he helped draw up plans for what was to become the trailblazing FIRST computer processing system.

He was invited to stay on, and became the first appointment to what would become the Department's IRD shop. Tony helped implement a \$250 million project which saw 28 district offices centralise their processing into three processing centres, in Hamilton, Upper Hutt and Christchurch.

Going against the trend of the times, IRD made its savings by moving away from outsourcing and developing more in-house capacity. Tony says the FIRST system was one of the first integrated revenue systems of its kind, now processing 29 different revenue types and accommodating policy initiatives such as child support and student loans.

Tony moved through strategic planning and operational management roles during the 1990s, and spent the last nine years at IRD as National Manager IT.

While proud of the developments he's helped shape at IRD, Tony was delighted to be appointed to the new position of Chief Information Officer at LINZ.

"While LINZ's IT systems do not need to cover the same transactional customer base as those of departments like Social Development and IRD, this department deals in huge amounts of information and we need the same capabilities as the bigger players."

Tony has been impressed with Landonline, which he says is second to none in terms of effort and commitment. "It's a well thought-out system built on a very good foundation." He's also

impressed with the culture within LINZ – the respect for the Chief Executive's vision, and the acceptance that changes will continue.

Over the years he has seen some high-profile government IT projects come to grief, and says it doesn't take rocket science to see why. "Success requires strong project ownership, a strong link to an overall plan and strong governance to monitor progress. It's Project Management 101, really."

These fundamentals will be incorporated into the IT governance model that's being developed for LINZ to support the e-Delivery strategy.

Tony says it's important to get the best out of an IT investment, but if something is not delivering, he'll have no hesitation in culling it from the system.

"Capacity planning is very important, and we'll be developing an upgrade cycle that takes in everything from the desktop PC through to networks.

"Planning for capacity needs is one element of a good IT planning process. It also needs to be linked to sound business planning. Our job is to understand the business idea and wrap the appropriate technology around that."

Tony says good IT systems planning requires quality dialogue with stakeholders to get a good fix on future needs. But he doesn't over-estimate abilities to second-guess the future. "A three-year planning window is realistic, with pointers only to needs four or five years ahead."

The IT infrastructure that the new IT Group will pull together within LINZ will reflect the Department's strong historical roots, but also provide a very sound platform for the future in terms of both architecture and governance, he adds.

Six senior management positions within the Group have been made – three internal appointments and three external.

As well as bringing together the Department's IT infrastructure, there are plenty of specific challenges, Tony says.

Growth in uptake of Landonline, commitment to making information available to citizens through the e-Delivery strategy, and outcomes of the Geospatial Strategy will be just some of the drivers. But he is mindful that the IT cart should not drive

the horse. While big projects like Landonline inevitably give shape to the IT infrastructure, Tony says it is important to leverage off that development.

“My theme word is ‘enterprise’,” Tony says. “That should help drive the architecture of the IT infrastructure we develop.

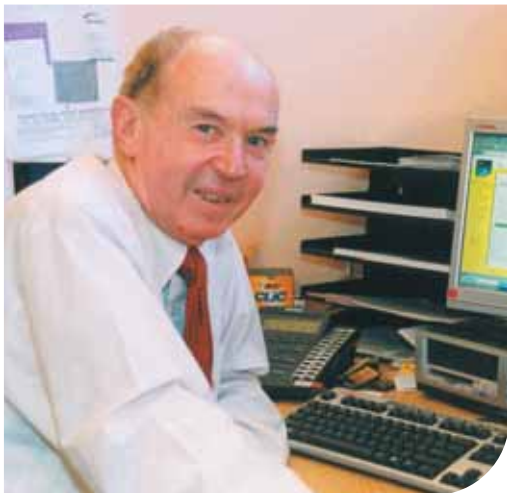
“We’ll be asking a lot of the same questions here that we asked at IRD. A lot of what we do will be consolidating and rationalising the IT systems we already have. But it won’t happen overnight. I envisage a two and a half year journey.”

So how is Tony Lester finding LINZ so far? “I’m delighted to be here,” he beams. And while the injured foot is slowing Tony down from a run to a walk, there’s no doubt that the Department’s new Chief Information Officer will be tackling his new role at a healthy gallop.

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Jim Mee: Appreciates instantaneous processing of transactions.



INVERCARGILL SOLICITOR HOOKED UP EARLY TO E-DEALING

Making the transition to e-dealing was in the end surprisingly easy, says Invercargill solicitor Jim Mee. Jim’s firm ‘James S Mee’ handles a large volume of residential conveyancing and was quick to sign up to Landonline when LINZ’s Invercargill office closed.

While he had quickly become a fan of Landonline’s first stage (*e-search*), Jim took a little more convincing by his staff to sign up for *e-dealing*.

Jim appreciates the way in which *e-dealing* can process transactions instantaneously, and has adapted his work practices to suit the electronic medium.

“When it was paper based, I dealt with each transaction individually, as they came through,” he explains. “Now my staff prepare the transactions in batches and I check and approve the transactions on my office manager’s computer.”

Office manager Wendy Sutherland says part of the motivation for getting in early to *e-dealing* was a perception that the system would eventually be compulsory and getting Jim used to logging on and using a computer without pressure.

“We thought it was better to get hooked up and used to the system,” she says. “There’s a group of practices in Invercargill using *e-dealing* and we’ve been able to practise on each other and learn the system. We started off by concentrating on the more straightforward transactions.”

Wendy is impressed with the level of detail as transactions are validated. Pre-validation of a dealing before submitting ensures spelling discrepancies are picked up (e.g. “Maree” typed in a Transfer versus “Marie” typed in a Mortgage).

Something like that may have slipped through under the paper-based system, she says. “But it potentially saves a \$20 rejection fee.”

At this stage only a small proportion of the practice’s conveyancing traffic is handled through *e-dealing*. This is partly because not all transactions are selected for this option, and partly because the firms at the other end of the deals are not yet signed up for the electronic system. “Of course in cases such as refinancing of mortgages and in-house settlements, we can do them internally,” she adds.

Wendy agrees with Jim that each side involved in a property transaction needs to be well organised to take full advantage of the benefits offered by *e-dealing*. She says the lower transaction cost and instantaneous registration on settlement date are big pluses.

“At this early stage, all parties are being super cautious as they get used to the new system. One side-effect of this is that for us it generates more paper than before. This is needed for things like disclosure documents, and for quality audits.”

While the shift from a paper to an electronic medium for property conveyancing and registration of title will inevitably take some getting used to, both Jim and Wendy are looking forward to reaping greater benefits from *e-dealing* as the system becomes more widely established as the medium of choice.

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PUTTING NAMES TO PLACES

The tides of history can leave some intriguing footprints on our cultural landscape. Take place names. Wellington Harbour for example, was known to pre-European Maori as Te Whanganui-a-Tara meaning 'the great harbour of Tara'. When it was charted in 1826 it was named Port Nicholson, after the harbourmaster at Port Jackson, Sydney. That name was in turn re-absorbed or transliterated into the Maori language as Poneke.

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The fledgling European settlement at what is now Petone was initially known as Britannia. The colonial name – and the settlement – didn't stick. Floods and strong southerlies pushed the settlers to safer environs further south. And the settlement itself took the name Wellington, a gesture of thanks to the Duke of Wellington in England by the New Zealand Company, to honour the Duke's support for colonisation.

New Zealand's place names are a tangible expression of the significance of various locations to both Maori and later settlers. Naming of geographic features and settlements can stir strong emotions. For more than 50 years it has been the task of the NZ Geographic Board Ngā Pou Taunaha o Aotearoa to manage the process of allocating place names in New Zealand – a more considered process than that available to New Zealand's early settlers and surveyors when putting names to places.

The Board was established in 1946 by an enlightened piece of legislation for its time. The Board is an independent statutory body that reports to the Minister for Land Information. It recognises the importance of Maori place names in its decisions, and allows for public consultation over naming decisions.

While the New Zealand Geographic Board Act 1946 has stood the test of time remarkably well, New Zealand is a very different place in the early 2000s to the New Zealand of the mid 1940s.

The Government is in the process of reviewing the Act, with a focus on changes which might affect its jurisdictional, consultative and administrative provisions. A wide-ranging discussion paper was published in October last year, with submissions closing in December 2003.

The consultation process involved four public meetings and a national hui in Wellington. Forty-eight written submissions were received.

Jurisdiction changes offshore

The 1946 Act provides for NZ Geographic Board jurisdiction (including the naming of underwater features) to extend to the 12-mile territorial limit only. Since then, New Zealand's responsibilities have expanded. The 200-mile exclusive economic zone has been established but more importantly New Zealand is in the process of establishing its territorial claim to the seabed to the extent of our continental shelf. The country has also been more directly involved in administration of the Ross Dependency, which includes naming of geographic features.

Submissions on the review strongly supported legislative change to reflect the extending of New Zealand's jurisdiction to include the continental shelf sea floor and Antarctic interests.



INTER-AGENCY CO-OPERATION FOR MANAGEMENT OF SOUTHERN LAKE

Question: What do LINZ, Queenstown Lakes District Council, Contact Energy, the Department of Conservation, Transit New Zealand, Otago Regional Council, two community associations and two Crown pastoral leaseholders have in common?

Answer: They're all keen to see better co-ordinated management of the southern foreshore of Lake Hawea.

You would think that with that many stakeholders involved, the task should be a straightforward one. It's never that simple, of course, but things are now progressing well thanks to some inter-agency co-ordination to improve the way the environment and facilities are managed.

The challenge in co-ordinating efforts to manage the lake shore, land and adjacent areas and facilities, is that the responsibilities are shared by a patchwork of organisations – government departments, local authorities, a power company and leaseholders. The pattern of responsibilities is partly a legacy of the lake's past development as part of the South Island hydro system. There is a control structure at the southern end of the lake. Contact Energy has an operating easement around the lake to allow variable lake levels.

The man-made facilities that require management around the lake include two toilet blocks and a boat ramp along the southern shoreline. LINZ is involved because these facilities date back to Crown involvement when the former Ministry of Works and Development was undertaking the hydro development work.

Jurisdiction changes on dry land

While the NZ Geographic Board is at present responsible for the naming of geographic features, suburbs and localities, towns and villages, etc, it has been the role of communities – through territorial local authorities (TLAs) – to name roads through the Local Government Act 1974. It is proposed to devolve official naming of suburbs and localities to TLAs while establishing clear guidelines spelling out demarcation of responsibilities and processes for assigning names in an integrated address context.

The Department of Conservation administers various acts which in some cases make provision for naming of protected conservation areas. It is proposed that in these cases public consultation over such names occurs and that the names, after the Board's concurrence, form part of New Zealand's comprehensive official place names record.

Consultation issues

While the Board consults with the community on proposals, the supporting legislation does not reflect current practice, especially the evolution of consultation for Maori place names. For place name changes associated with Treaty of Waitangi settlements, it has been proposed that the suggested changes go through the Board's usual consultation process before incorporation into a deed of settlement.

Board membership changes proposed

The Board currently comprises eight members, but the proposed extension of jurisdiction under the review will increase the Board's area of responsibility significantly. The review has proposed expanding membership by one, and giving the Minister

for Land Information more flexibility over appointments to the Board, to ensure the appropriate expertise and community representation.

Access to information – setting a good example

Submissions have been strongly in favour of the Board's role in providing an accessible and authoritative Gazetteer of place names to support key functions such as emergency services and postal services. There was also strong support for the Crown to be bound by its own Act to set an example to other sectors of consistent use of official place names.

Where to next?

Following the summary and analysis of submissions, published in August 2005, Land Information New Zealand has been developing policy to progress the review. Once Cabinet approval has been received, legislation changes will begin, prior to the introduction of a Bill.

Once enacted, New Zealanders can be assured that the names we give to our significant places – both on land and on the sea floor – will continue to reflect their world view. The amended legislation will provide a system that's suited to naming features of our geographical and cultural landscape well into the 21st century.

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The facilities are heavily used by visitors and are being looked after by LINZ. (The northern shore of the lake is far less accessible, and doesn't feature the same management issues.)

Weed control is another management issue. A five-year biosecurity plan for Crown-owned land around the lake has provided the platform for a memorandum of understanding (MOU) that will bring the above agencies together in a concerted effort to control weeds along the foreshore. The main weeds of concern are wilding trees (especially *Pinus contorta*), gorse and broom. Some areas of another pest plant, *Cotoneaster* spp. – although not part of the regional pest management strategy – are being targeted by LINZ this summer to help control the spread of the weed.

David Morgan, Contract Manager with LINZ Crown Property Management, has drawn together the MOU on weed control. He says that it makes good sense for all organisations to co-operate in the weed control operation.

“The MOU sets out management responsibilities for all groups and agencies associated with the lake. By working together the groups can co-ordinate their weed control activities

and take advantage of economies of scale to save money on contractors' costs.”

David says this summer marks the first season of co-ordinated weed control work around Lake Hawea and it is hoped to have the MOU signed and operational by February 2005.

It is hoped that during the timeframe for the lake's biosecurity plan, the responsible agencies will also be able to implement a long-term solution that will simplify the management of the entire southern lake shore.

The co-operation between community groups and responsible agencies concerning Lake Hawea is an excellent example of the way agencies can work together to ensure a valued public resource is sensibly and efficiently managed, with responsibilities shared fairly.

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