



## Geospatial Standards Project Advisory Group Terms of Reference

### Context

The government is undertaking a Geospatial Standards Project as part of the initial phase of the New Zealand Geospatial Strategy work programme.

The project is being led by the New Zealand Geospatial Office (NZGO), which sits within Land Information New Zealand (LINZ), in conjunction with an inter-departmental and industry reference group comprising officials from the State Services Commission, Statistics New Zealand, Standards New Zealand, LINZ and private sector participants.

The project involves work on the current state and future role of government in relation to geospatial standards. The project's key objective is to design an option for an effective and consistent structure for the adoption, adaptation, development and maintenance of geospatial standards that promotes access and interoperability of geospatial data in New Zealand.

The project will:

- Assess how geospatial data standards for New Zealand are created, used and maintained.
- Scope an efficient and effective role for government in geospatial data standards.

The project will take into account developments in global geospatial standards development processes and will assess the opportunities to further coordinate and harmonise New Zealand's approach with that in Australia, where appropriate. The project will also incorporate work already underway, done, or planned by the New Zealand Geospatial Office under the New Zealand Geospatial Strategy.

### Project Phases

The project is divided into four phases.

1. Research and data gathering
2. Engagement
3. Analysis
4. Reporting

In the first phase NZGO will, through research and data gathering, identify and define the current position, problems with the current arrangements, the international position, and potential options for government involvement in relation to geospatial standards.

In phase two of the project, NZGO will engage with the reference group (referred to above) to refine the research and data, and then engage with a wider group using

an advisory group process to further refine. The advisory group process involves NZGO inviting an advisory group (as detailed in these terms of reference) to act as a sector expert sounding board against which NZGO will test the accuracy of the identified current position, international position, and problem identification, and to test options for a potential role for government.

In phase three of the project, NZGO will (using the research and consultation), analyse proposed options for a government role and draft a report for the Geospatial Executive Group recommending a preferred option.

In phase four of the project, NZGO will release a report on the work done and a proposed option for the Geospatial Executive Group's approval. This is scheduled for May 2009.

### **Advisory Group - Focus and Membership**

The purpose of the advisory group is to bring together sector and expert perspectives to ensure policy proposals best meet the needs and circumstances of New Zealand.

One advisory group will attend three meetings held in Wellington.

Representatives from key sector government and non-government organisations (industry participants, professional organisations and government bodies) are being asked to participate in the advisory group.

Advisory group members will provide valuable sector expertise and knowledge, test the policy options, and provide advice on the costs and benefits of various proposals and any implementation issues. Members will be appointed in their individual capacity rather than as representatives of a particular group, government body or industry group.

The advisory group will have a maximum of 12-15 members (plus NZGO officials). The 12-15 members will allow for a sufficiently broad representation across the range of sector interests, while being sufficiently small to allow practical and useful conversations to take place in the group.

Restricting the size of the advisory group will mean that some stakeholders may not be on the advisory group. Those who wish to can contribute to the project by making direct contact with NZGO.

### **Role of Advisory Group**

The role of the advisory group will be to provide specialist, practical and independent advice and feedback (on request) on any of the following:

- the workings of the geospatial sector
- potential options for government involvement that will address the problems identified with geospatial standards in New Zealand
- how people view the options
- the costs and benefits of various options
- any implementation and design issues around the preferred option
- any other matter on which NZGO considers appropriate for the advisory group to provide advice.

NZGO seeks and welcomes the views of the advisory group members, but the advisory group will not be responsible for any conclusions or decisions on the project, nor will the advisory group be expected to produce a report or any other documentation or to make any formal recommendations.

### **Process for Meetings**

NZGO officials will consult with advisory group members on the most effective way to conduct meetings, but, at a minimum, members will receive an agenda prior to meetings, together with discussion papers (if any).

There will be no formal minute-taking, but an NZGO official may take notes in order to inform policy development. The discussion will be taken into account as part of the project's overall process of policy design.

### **Free and Frank Discussions in Meetings**

NZGO wants advisory group members to have free and frank discussions about geospatial standards arrangements.

To encourage this, NZGO officials will apply Chatham House Rules to the advisory group meetings. This means that officials may use the information and views discussed at the meetings, but the identity or the affiliation of any speaker will not be revealed outside the meeting.

Any notes taken by officials may be subject to a request under the Official Information Act 1981. However, members' names will not be recorded in these notes, only the comments made. Each request for information would be considered on its own merits, and potentially statements of the advisory group could be released to a requester.

The advisory group members will be asked to keep advisory group discussions confidential. Hence, while advisory group members may provide information on the timing and progress of the project back to their industry groups, members will be asked not to repeat advisory group conversations outside the meeting.

### **Media**

NZGO will provide updates to the media and parties who have expressed an interest in the project.

Again, to encourage free and frank discussion, NZGO will ask advisory group members not to provide comment to the media on discussions in the advisory group, and alert LINZ to any media queries received.

### **Conflicts of Interests**

Members of the advisory group will not be asked to give formal advice, or to produce any formal report. This should reduce the risk of any conflicts of interest arising between the role of an advisory group member and their ordinary employment/obligations. However, group members will be required to declare any real or perceived conflicts of interest, and any conflicts of interest will be handled according to relevant LINZ policy.

## **Time Commitment**

The time commitment for advisory group members is estimated at a few hours per meeting over three meetings. The commitment should be small, as the advisory group will not be expected to produce any set document. Instead, as noted above, advisory group discussion will feed into the design of a workable structure for geospatial data standards creation, use and maintenance that can be recommended to the Geospatial Executive Group for implementation.

## **No Remuneration**

Advisory group members will not receive remuneration. Advisory groups are not statutory boards for the purposes of the Fees and Travelling Allowance Act 1951 and general travel expenses and sitting fees will not be paid. NZGO may choose to meet travel costs for certain appointed members residing outside of Wellington, if appropriate, or to secure their attendance.

## **Location**

Advisory group meetings will be held in Wellington (coordinated through LINZ's National office). NZGO officials will talk to advisory group members to determine the most appropriate arrangements.

## **Contact with LINZ**

NZGO welcomes contact and contributions from all parties interested in the project at all phases of the project. If you would like to send in comments or to arrange meetings with NZGO officials, please contact NZGO by email through "contact us" at [www.geospatial.govt.nz](http://www.geospatial.govt.nz) or by post at:

Geospatial Standards Project  
New Zealand Geospatial Office  
Land Information New Zealand  
160 Lambton Quay  
Private Box 5501  
Wellington 6145

For full details of the project, including updates and media releases, please refer to [www.geospatial.govt.nz](http://www.geospatial.govt.nz)

## **Timetable**

Expressions of interest for the advisory group will close on **Friday 27 March 2009**. Officials will contact all people who have expressed an interest in being part of the advisory group by 31 March 2009 to confirm the membership of the advisory group. While NZGO officials will determine the most appropriate timetabling for advisory group meetings in conjunction with advisory group members, the first advisory group meeting is tentatively scheduled for 8 April 2009, followed by meetings on 22 April 2009 and 8 May 2009.