



ANZLIC

the Spatial Information Council

**POLICY STATEMENT
ON
SPATIAL DATA MANAGEMENT**

April 1999

TOWARDS THE AUSTRALIAN SPATIAL DATA INFRASTRUCTURE

PURPOSE

This ANZLIC Policy Statement establishes a set of Principles for the responsible management of spatial data as a critical national resource and commits all jurisdictions in Australia to cooperate in the implementation of the Australian Spatial Data Infrastructure (ASDI) which will give effect to those Principles.

The policy builds upon the close cooperation between governments that resulted from the Intergovernmental Agreement on the Environment. In particular, it further develops the objectives of Schedule 1 to that Agreement which tasked ANZLIC with making environmental data more accessible and with improving intergovernmental arrangements to avoid duplication and overlap in the collection and maintenance of data.

The ASDI is necessary to support Australia's economic, ecological and social development and well being. Not only is it essential for the development of an innovative and competitive spatial data industry, it is an indispensable resource for decision-making across all sectors of business, industry and the community. It will also enable Australia to participate constructively in international initiatives to establish regional and global spatial data infrastructures and, thereby, to assist countries in our region to develop their economies.

BACKGROUND

Spatial data is the key to planning and sustainable management and development of our natural resources at national, regional and local levels. It is also fundamental to the development of the economic and social infrastructure, provision of community services, effective government administration and resolution of community conflicts.

As the key role of spatial data has become increasingly recognised, Australian governments have initiated a variety of cooperative arrangements to ensure that such information is consistent and available. However, there is no national framework within which all existing arrangements can operate and which can provide the basis for future cooperation at the national, regional and local levels.

This policy has been developed by the ANZLIC in order to provide such a framework.

SCOPE

Recognising that the management and use of intra-government spatial data is the responsibility of the relevant jurisdiction, this Policy applies to:

- all forms of fundamental spatial data (see definitions)
- the collection, management and use of fundamental spatial data in the national interest, whether application is at national, regional or local levels
- the use of fundamental spatial data by governments, industry and the community.

PRINCIPLES

ANZLIC believes that the adoption of the following Principles will ensure that management practices for fundamental spatial data are nationally consistent to achieve the benefits of the Australian Spatial Data Infrastructure.

- 1 Access** All sectors of the community should have easy, efficient and equitable access to fundamental spatial data where technology, data formats, institutional arrangements, location, costs and conditions do not inhibit its use.
- 2 Conformity and Quality** Custodians of fundamental spatial data should ensure that these data sets conform to agreed global and national standards where appropriate to achieve a consistent level of quality that can meet the needs of the various users in the community.
- 3 Content** The fundamental spatial data needed by all sectors of the community to support economic, ecological and social development and well being should be available.
- 4 Industry Engagement** Partnerships between industry and government should be promoted to develop industry skills, maximise the use of spatial data resources in both public and private sectors and encourage the development of an innovative and competitive value-adding industry in Australia.
- 5 Avoidance of Duplication** Organisations and jurisdictions should actively identify and exploit the many opportunities that exist for cooperation and sharing of fundamental spatial data to avoid duplication and maximise benefits of investment.
- 6 Sensitivity** Management of fundamental spatial data will include arrangements to preserve confidentiality, privacy, security and intellectual property rights which will protect the rights of data custodians and all sectors of the community.

IMPLEMENTATION

ANZLIC will implement this Policy by:

- Supporting and promoting the implementation of the Principles expressed in this Policy;
- Continuing to provide an effective national coordination and consultative mechanism for national, State/Territory and local governments;
- Establishing effective national consultative arrangements between government, the private sector and community organisations;
- Providing leadership, consultation and coordination for the development of the ASDI with the following characteristics:
 - a network of jurisdiction and agency based databases which, collectively, satisfy the community's need for nationally consistent fundamental datasets;
 - a suite of technical standards, endorsed by ANZLIC and, where appropriate, submitted to Standards Australia for consideration as national standards, which facilitates the sharing of data between agencies and jurisdictions and which provides the necessary consistency and compatibility to enable the fundamental datasets to be combined to develop value-added products;
 - intergovernmental arrangements to facilitate the equitable sharing of data between agencies and jurisdictions;
 - administrative arrangements and policies that facilitate industry and community access to fundamental data under conditions that promote better decision making based on good quality fundamental spatial data and the development of a competitive spatial data industry;
 - an Australian Spatial Data Directory (ASDD), implemented as a distributed network of jurisdiction and agency based directories, complying with standards endorsed by ANZLIC.

All jurisdictions will contribute to the implementation of this Policy by striving to:

- Adopt and promote the implementation of the Principles expressed in this Policy;
- Actively participate in, support and promote the work program of ANZLIC and its associated coordination arrangements;
- Establish and support effective jurisdiction coordination arrangements to give effect to ANZLIC initiatives;
- Implement jurisdiction and agency based spatial data infrastructures that conform to and contribute to the implementation of the ASDI;
- Make metadata available by establishing nodes as conforming components of the ASDD;

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- Adopt and encourage the implementation of technical standards that facilitate the implementation of the ASDI;
- Use their best endeavours to adopt and implement administrative arrangements and policies that give full effect to the ASDI, facilitate industry and community access to fundamental data, and encourage sharing of data between agencies and jurisdictions.

DEFINITIONS

ANZLIC	The peak council for coordination of spatial data management in Australia and New Zealand
ASDD	The Australian Spatial Data Directory. A key component of the ASDI which will provide to the community information about the availability, characteristics and quality of spatial data held by governments and the private sector and how that information may be obtained.
ASDI	The Australian Spatial Data Infrastructure. A network of fundamental spatial databases maintained by custodians and linked through the adoption of consistent standards, policies and administrative arrangements.
fundamental spatial data	Spatial data for which there is a justified need for national consistency by multiple users in order for those users to meet their objectives. A fundamental dataset may comprise a number of compatible databases maintained by custodians in several jurisdictions.
spatial data	Spatial data, often called land information or geographic information is the location and name of features that are associated with a position on, above or beneath the surface of the earth. It includes data about road, railways, hydrography, airports, harbours, public utilities, property boundaries, climate, atmosphere, community features and facilities, tenure, valuation, landform, geology, marine, demography, soil type, vegetation, human and economic geography.
spatial data infrastructure	A term that describes the fundamental spatial data datasets, the standards that enable them to be integrated, the distribution network to provide access to them and the policies and administrative arrangements that ensure compatibility between jurisdictions and agencies.

This Policy Statement was endorsed by the meeting of ANZLIC members in April 1999.

T. Fenwick,
ANZLIC Chairman