

FAR NORTH QUEENSLAND GIS USER GROUP

CHAIR REPORT

Fungis reaches out

Hi all

Fungis is working to increase communication both within the GIS industry, and with anyone who can benefit from knowing where things are.

I've just witnessed the results of such communication not happening. Two management agencies were mapping vegetation in the same area. What a horrible waste of resources. I had met, talked and played sport with the people involved but still hadn't realised the duplication that was occurring.

On a brighter note I used the Fungis E-Group to ask for help with a techno issue and had a dozen pieces of advice within a

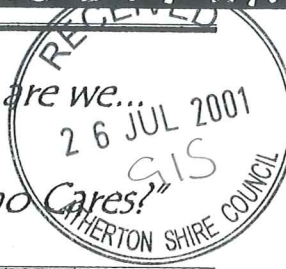
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The 2001 Annual Seminar



"Where are we...

...and who cares?"



Firstly, many apologies for the late notice for this year's annual seminar. August seemed so far away and then, all of a sudden, it wasn't. The seminar is titled "Where are we ... and who cares?" The title reflects the attempts by some to map the future of the spatial industry. The forum on the second afternoon will explore the issues being raised by the work of organisations like Spatial Queensland and QSIIS. With industry heavyweights present like Graham Stanton and Jack De Lange, the discussion should be interesting. Please don't leave your opinions at home.

The first day and second morning will be an excellent chance for all of us to swap ideas and experiences. The speakers are covering such diverse subjects as the use of GIS in the emergency services, the use of social and economic data, vector control and acid sulphate soils. The mystery tour in the afternoon will hopefully not involve long-distance bus reversing at high speed as in a previous year. It will be a great opportunity to get away from the seminar venue for a little while and talk shop, or not as the case maybe. How much grappa do you think it takes to make a really good vintage of mango wine?

Below are some questions and web resources to start you thinking about the forum topic.

What is a "spatial industry"?

Do you belong to a spatial industry? Why?

Do you believe a spatial industry should

work together to make (spatial) information available to the masses in the hope of better decision making and an informed public?

Where is money to be made in the spatial industry?

What makes the spatial industry different from other fields of technical expertise?

Why are there still problems of intellectual property and copyright associated with spatial data?

Is GIS elitist?

Why is data so expensive?

Queensland Spatial Information Infrastructure Strategy
www.qsiis.qld.gov.au

Spatial Business Community
www.xyz.au.com

Queensland Telecommunications Industry Group Limited
www.qtig.com.au

ANZLIC The Spatial Information Council
www.anzlic.org.au

Spatial Australia
www.spatial.org.au

Commonwealth Spatial Data Committee
www.csdc.gov.au

Public Sector Mapping Agencies
www.psma.com.au

For more information about the seminar please contact Warwick Sayers on 40466638 (warwick.sayers@env.qld.gov.au) or our tireless exec. secretary, Lesley Davis (LjmDavis@bigpond.com).

E-GROUPS

Hello FUNGIS members,

During preliminary discussions regarding the development of the FUNGIS Communications Strategy (soon to be published) it was identified that the FUNGIS e-group is being under-utilised. The Executive Committee believes that this form of media has the potential to offer a useful forum for members to exchange ideas and knowledge pertinent to our region. It's my personal view that this kind of networking is fundamental to the concept of a "User Group". All FUNGIS members and interested parties are welcome to contribute ideas, ask questions and offer solutions etc. to the group. Please bear in mind that this is not a technical issues group. Several technical support groups already exist under the Geographical Information Systems (GIS) banner on the Yahoo groups site. Note also that this is a letter of invitation only. To be a part of the FUNGIS egroup please register yourself at the Yahoo site www.groups.yahoo.com/group/fungis and then subscribe to the FUNGIS egroup.

We look forward to hearing from you soon!

Mark Hopp

META DATA COORDINATOR

QSIIS Information Office Visit to Cairns

The Director of the QSIIS Information Office, Graham Stanton, visited Cairns on the 27th June and took the opportunity to meet with the FUNGIS Executive and FUNGIS members regarding recent developments in the implementation of the spatial information infrastructure. This infrastructure is the foundation for assisting users obtain easy access to relevant and reliable spatial information. Graham provided details such as the Business Framework which includes a suite of data access agreements and the QSIIS 2001 Action Plan. For more details see the new QIO website at:

www.oesr.qld.gov.au

Cathy Evans from the Office of Economic and Statistical Research was also in Cairns to conduct a Statistic Liaison Officers (SLO) network meeting. Cathy is based in Townsville. There was considerable interest as to the amount of "statistical" data available which is spatially based. Cathy has extended an open invitation to any FUNGIS members who would

like to attend the SLO meetings held regularly in Cairns and Townsville. Her phone number is 47607650.

Meta Data Matters
(North Queensland)

There have been a couple of significant developments since the last newsletter.

There has been an obvious need to have a reliable Metadata Entry Tool (MET) to be readily available to spatial information users. To this end, QSIIS are developing two METs for creating metadata records. The first will allow direct input of metadata records (and updates) across the Web (with secure write access). The second is an Access database that can be downloaded from the Web or supplied in CD format. These are currently being built by QSIIS and will be released this month. Stay tuned and I will distribute the relevant details.

QSIIC recognise the need to have on ground support in implementing the

MAPPING COMMUNITY INFORMATION WORKSHOP

On February 21st 2001, FUNGIS organised the Mapping Community Information Workshop. The workshop was designed to bring together Community Groups, K12-Schools and Industry Groups and for FUNGIS to make the link.

There is no doubt, the Community are Interested in the technology. Over 60 people attended the 3 hour workshop, many were especially interested in the four excellent Community Based presentations from:-

Jim Monahan – Aboriginal Community GIS in Kowanyama and Pompuraaw

Raymond Delai – Herbert River Information Centre

Gary Searle – Trinity Bay High Schools GIS Projects

David King – Storm Surge and landslips in Far

North Queensland.

41 different Community Groups were represented on the day, covering many different interests such as Savannah Guides, Mamu Reference Group, Apex International, Blue Care and Birds Australia.

The audience were primarily people who had not used GIS themselves before, so the evening gave many Community Group representatives a chance to understand some of the concepts of GIS. The feedback session towards the end allowed us to find out some of the types of GIS Projects, which could be attempted through linking Community Groups with Industry Groups and K12-Schools. However many people expressed an interest in the opportunity to think up some ideas in their own time.

Queensland Spatial Information Infrastructure Strategy. The QSIIS Information Office has been set up on behalf of QSIIC and is situated within the Office of Economic and Statistical Research, Queensland Treasury. Graham Stanton is the Director. They have also created two positions for the next twelve months, to assist in the implementation of some of the infrastructure requirements. The positions are called State Coordinators and there is one each for North and South Queensland, the State being divided generally on a line east-west from the south of Rockhampton. These positions will provide assistance not only in Metadata Coordination, but also in securing agreements with Local Authorities across Queensland for the development of a state-wide Property Location Index (PLI) and in the continued implementation of Rural Road Addressing (RRA). I have been appointed to the North Queensland position and Kevin Landy has been appointed in the south.

The PLI is an index of Real Property Descriptions matched to their respective street addresses. Many systems currently rely on Real Property Descriptions as the principal means of access. The PLI will be an available

resource that allows users to also search by a more recognisable key, the street address.

The RRA is a distance based measurement system that allocates each rural property with a unique address, based on the distance of the property entrance from an assigned starting point on the road.

I look forward to catching up with you in what will be a very busy year. Please note my new contact details:

Geoff Hunter
QSIIS State Coordinator (North Queensland)
Mobile 042 7105 944
Phone (To be advised)
Fax 40312170
Email Geoff.Hunter@Treasury.qld.com.au
Mail: PO Box 2378
Cairns QLD 4870

Location -Office of State Revenue
Level 9
Cairns Corporate Tower
15 Lake Street
Cairns

HOUSE KEEPING

Are your contact details correct? If you don't want to be left in the dark let FUNGIS know your current email address, postal address and telephone number. Please also tell us if you would prefer to receive information from FUNGIS eg. the Newsletter, via electronic media rather than post.

Thank you to members who have paid their annual membership fees for 2001. We value your membership very much and would appreciate payment of any outstanding fees at your earliest convenience. Don't forget Corporate Membership allows an organisation to nominate up to 5 people for the mailing list and up to 5 people receive discounted rates at workshops and seminars. You can forward your reply to any or all of the above to Lesley Davis at ljmdavis@bigpond.com; PO Box 1920 Cairns or telephone 40520525.

So FUNGIS have developed a 'User Needs Survey', which should identify the skills, equipment and needs of these groups. This survey was mailed with some promotional material to Workshop participants on the 14th June 2001.

One of the primary queries coming from Community Groups was the need to find out "where do I start looking to get data?" I am sure the Data Sharing Co-operative will be a welcome initiative in our Community, when it becomes reality.

The overwhelming interest is a good sign that people can see a real need for GIS in their Community Groups. I hope this is opening a door to a whole new group of potential GIS users in our Community... who knows perhaps we may see our Local Community Groups showing spatial trends and relationships developed through GIS technology, on the local news before we know it!

If you'd like further information regarding any of these articles or you would like to make a contribution to the newsletter you can contact Mark Hopp on 4032 3377.

e-mail - mark.hopp@braziermotti.com.au

For membership enquiries contact Lesley Davis on 4054 7176.

e-mail - ljmdavis@bigpond.com

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INTERACTIVE GIS

The use of interactive GIS within a vegetation planning framework

The use of Geographical Information Systems (GIS) has certainly increased over the past few years. From local authorities to agricultural companies, when built with accurate and adequate data, GIS can be very effective in assisting to make the right decision. However, more often than not, it is only the scientists that use technology in this way, not the community.

The regional vegetation management planning process has been recently established by the Department of Natural Resources and Mines (NR&M) as a result of the proclamation of the *Vegetation Management Act 1999*. A major outcome of this planning process is to maintain biodiversity through the sustainable management of ecosystems, guided by scientific and community knowledge.

To steer the planning process, management committees have been established in each bioregion, comprising of local government, indigenous members, agricultural industries, community and conservation representatives. These groups have a mandate to consider, and make appropriate management recommendations, for all ecosystems which lead to long term ecologically sustainable development.

In order to combine scientific and local knowledge of ecosystems the group agreed to use GIS in a very innovative, interactive way. Requesting detailed natural resource information such as topography, rivers and streams, wetlands, geology, soils, agricultural land capability and vegetation, superimposed on a satellite image and projected onto a large screen, allows the committee to discuss the attributes of each and every ecosystem. Systematically, layer upon layer of information is introduced to form the basis of detailed discussion interacting local knowledge within the committee.

There are many advantages of this interactive and flexible process - the ability to display variable layers of information; zoom in and out of images to discuss issues; clarify details such as tenure; and discuss the conservation status of remnant vegetation. As this planning process unfolds and the whole landscape is discussed, other natural resources issues come to light.

The final aim is to assist the community, through the use of an advanced geographical information system, participate in a unique decision making process on managing native vegetation within their community.

Helen McLaughlin

CAPE YORK PENINSULA SUSTAINABLE FIRE MANAGEMENT

Cape York Peninsula Development Association

The Cape York Peninsula Sustainable Fire Management Project is a community-directed project focussing on documenting existing fire regimes and establishing best practice fire management for sustainable pastoralism, biodiversity conservation, traditional indigenous approaches and broad community issues. The project is focussing in detail on three areas, including Iron Range, Laura basin and Aurukun. However, the whole of Cape York is being studied at a regional scale.

Part of this project involves utilising satellite data to document fires. Fine resolution Landsat-5&7 imagery will be purchased 2 to 3 times for each dry season from 1997-2001 to document current burning regimes by creating a detailed five-year fire history of the three research areas. The Landsat quick-looks (<http://acs.auslig.gov.au/intro.html>) are also being mapped from 2000 onwards to show in less detail those areas affected by fire. This data is valuable to land managers as it is mapped every 16 days. These datasets are overlaid on topographic maps and distributed to land managers so that they can see the areas of land that have been burnt for each month.

One of the key project objectives is to disseminate fire map products to land managers as quickly as possible so that they can more effectively manage fires at a property and regional scale. In order to achieve this, Landsat quick-looks and NOAA hotspots are being distributed to land managers via email or the post. Together the quick-looks and hotspots provide a fairly comprehensive, accurate and timely representation of fire locations throughout Cape York Peninsula. Using the daily hotspots, a fire's path can be followed and the fire scars show the extent of the area that has been affected by fire. The limitation of this method is the affect of cloud cover on data collection, especially from October onwards.

Land managers are impressed with the value of this data for fire management purposes as it enables them to track a fire's position in relation to assets and natural features, it helps them determine the effectiveness of early-season burning and the potential path of late season fires. Overall, this process of data dissemination is helping improve the management of fires in Cape York Peninsula as it is helping to empower land managers.

Virginia Cooper

(Continued from page 1)

day. It made a tedious task much easier. See this newsletter for details on being a part of this E-Group discussion forum.

Of course the best opportunity for communicating about locational issues is the annual Fungis Seminar. This year it's titled "Where are we, ... and who cares?". It's on the 1st and 2nd of August so get your rego in. There's something in the agenda for everyone. Again see this newsletter for details.

See you at the seminar
Terry

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November 2000

"Don't be left in the dark!"

FUNGIS

Newsletter

FAR NORTH QUEENSLAND GIS USER GROUP INCORPORATED

CHAIR REPORT

Spatial Information - What's going on?

Just what we wanted (apart from the million dollars). The open forum at the August seminar gave us all a chance to state what we wanted. The exec went through the list and arrived at the following priorities for the year :-

1. More workshops
2. Sharing current developments in the industry
3. Meta-Data actually happening
4. Better communication between FUNGIS members

The first actions we've planned are :-

1. - a ripper end-of-year meeting and breakup (see article) - a (GIS in the Community) display and seminar (see article)
3. - a metadata getstarted workshop (pending arrival of a tool)
4. - develop a mem-

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The Spatial Information and the New Economy Conference was held in Brisbane on 1 September 2000. The speakers included:

Professor David Coleman - Chairman, Dept. of geodesy and Geomatic Engineering, University of New Brunswick, Canada

Dr. Peter Zwart - Spatial Information Consultant, Hobart

Dr. John Cook - Lecturer QUT and Consultant

Wal Mayr - Director ERSIS Australia Pty. Ltd

Adrian Tout - State Account Manager, Pacific Access Pty. Ltd.

Ian Mathieson - Managing Director, Spatial Data Exchange Pty. Ltd

Dr. David Pullar - Lecturer UQ and SI Consultant

Dr. Ron Grenfell - Senior Lecturer RMIT, Melbourne

Tim Barker - QUT and DNR

Daniel Steudler - Swiss Fed. Directorate for Cadastral Surveying

Graham Stanton - Director of QSIIS Information Office

The theme of the conference was to consider the current status of the Spatial Information Industry and to explore future directions. A number of common themes emerged.

- The shifting role of governments and the private sector in developing spatial information infrastructure.
- Technological innovation particularly the Internet and spatial data engines.
- The convergence of technologies such as Digital mapping, Internet, Automotive, Telecommunications, Consumer electronics, Guides and directories.
- Use of spatial information in non-traditional areas such as in-car navigation
- Commercial opportunities in spatial information including data, software, systems and products.

A Joint Australian Consulting Surveyors

Queensland (ACSQ)/DNR Opportunities Search Conference was held in Brisbane on 13 October 2000 to follow up on the Spatial Information Conference held in September. The speakers included a number of DNR staff and private sector representatives. From DNR they were:

Rob Freeman - Deputy Director General

Richard Eden - Chief Information Officer

Laurie Glass - Principal Cartographer

Lindsay Redlich - Principal Project Officer

Steve Jones - Manager, Spatial Information & Analysis, EPA

Bruce Carey - Senior Soil Conservationist

Mick Capelin - Manager (Land Management)

Graeme Bell - Computer Systems Analyst

From the private sector they were:

Jack de Lange - CEO, Consulting Surveyors Queensland

Ian McKeague - Past Chairman, ACSQ

David Sinclair - Managing Director, QASCO Surveys Pty Ltd

Bernie Fitzpatrick - Geoimage

Peter Stopford - Managing Director, C&B Consultants

John Laing - Connel Wagner

Peter Graham - Whitsunday Group

Tim Brazier - Managing Director, Brazier Motti

Wal Mayr - Managing Director, ERSIS Australia

Brian McLennan - Chairman, SITE

Graham Stanton - Director, QSIIS Information Office

The themes of the conference were similar to the earlier conference in September with a stronger emphasis on the immediate future and current activities in Queensland. The three objectives of the conference were:

- To make DNR and the private sector more aware of each others objectives.
- To foster a climate of mutual cooperation and understanding.

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META DATA MATTERS

A core group of the steering committee members have recently participated 3 workshops facilitated by Brad Dorrington - Project Officer of the Natural Resource Management Board (NRMB).

The aim of these workshops is to get the DSC business plan finalised to assist in promoting continued support mainly from government agencies & relevant program managers. The business plan will also be used to accompany the DSC preliminary application in seeking NHT funding to implement any part or all of our plan.

Preliminary applications are due 30th November 2000.

Mike Stott

North Queensland Meta-data Matters

A brief update on the coordination of metadata in North Queensland.

I have now spoken with quite a number of FUNGIS members (and others), identified some of the issues important to you and developed a format in preparation for conducting some half day hands-on workshops in metadata capture and use.

One major issue that needs to be resolved is the availability of a working Metadata Entry Tool (MET). The ANZLIC MET, which was upgraded in February from Access 2 to Access97, is not functioning properly for many users, particularly those using NT or Windows98 platforms.

ANZLIC have been working on a bug fix since July but are having

difficulty because of the inconsistent nature of the problem. Two potential fixes were received recently but have not proven successful. ANZLIC do not intend to continue maintaining the current MET in its present form, because of the existing problems and the difficulties in providing a CD application based MET, which needs to be compliant with the multitude of software, hardware, platforms etc in use. Other MET options are being considered by them.

QSIIS are also looking at what they can do in providing METs to assist custodians in Queensland. This will be discussed in detail at the next QSIIS Data Committee meeting on the 9th November in Brisbane. Peter Swain and I will be attending.

In addition, the Department of Communication and Information, Local Government, Planning and Sport is looking at

CAIRNSCITY.COM

CairnsCity.com

(An Initiative of the Trinity Bay State High School Year 10 GIS Class)

Don't you wish that in one foul swoop you could find out, what time your uncle is playing footy, what time Cairns Central is open this weekend, when the next big concert is on and what your best friends aunt's phone number is all whilst writing an E-mail and chatting to people all over the world.

and ticket link but what if you could go into one internet site and find out everything you need to know about all these things above and much, much more, with only having to go to one address.

The year 10 Study of Society and Environment (SOSE) class has done it again, they are offering you Cairns most prestige internet site and biggest directory service for Cairns on the internet today, at one click of a mouse button you can have current information on what's happening throughout the city.

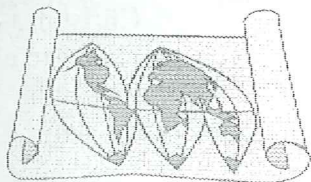
Sure there is the yellow pages, and the internet Every class lesson is spent making web pages,

some shorter-term alternatives that may be of practical use to users and enable the workshops to commence as soon as possible.

While the MET issues are being resolved I will continue contacting and visiting data users to see the current status of your spatial information and associated metadata, find out from you what your needs are and to discuss how metadata can be used to assist you in making the best use of existing information.

In the meantime if you would like to discuss any aspect of metadata, please do not hesitate to contact me on Ph 40 398 282 or Mobile 041 9730 324.

Geoff Hunter



FUNGIS MEMBER-SHIP DETAILS

At the September 2000 Executive Committee meeting it was agreed that membership fees should be increased to better cover general operating costs. It was also agreed to send out membership fee accounts once per year (December/January) rather than quarterly to allow more streamlined bookkeeping and necessary follow-up action (eg. reminder notices). Membership fees will be increased from January 2001. Remaining 2000 invoices to include 3 months at old rate and 12 months at new rate. Invoices for members paid up to June 2001 to be discounted. New annual membership fees are:

\$20 - Student or Unemployed

\$40 - Individual

\$80 - Corporate.

Please contact Lesely Davis for further information (*see below*)

GIS DAY

International GIS Day is November 15th!

FUNGIS is focusing on promoting GIS to Schools and Community Groups through posters and flyers with a follow up workshop arranged for February 2001. FUNGIS members are invited to attend a 'GIS Day Hang-over', on November 16th. 2-4 ESRI User Group - DCILGPS Conference Room - level 2 Orchid Plaza, Cairns 4-6 GPS Road-test (checking the coordinates of vital locations in town) 7pm onwards FUNGIS end of year break up - our host is ... our humble Chairperson, Terry's Verandah - 3 Kurrajong Street, Earlville (BYO drinks and togs). **-Lisa Rutten**

linking web pages, there are phone calls coming from all directions and maps of suburbs coming out of their ears, however the finished product is something.

SO why not visit them at www.cairnscity.com and see how good they really are!!!!

Alternatively, give them a call on 4051 4278.

(Original article by Kerry Gonsalves, adapted and reprinted with permission)

If you'd like further information regarding any of these articles or you would like to make a contribution to the newsletter you can contact Mark Hopp on 4032 3377.

e-mail - mark.hopp@braziermotti.com.au

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- To plan a future where DNR and the private sector have agreed and understood roles.

The common themes to emerge from the conference were:

- The need for standards and protocols
- An understanding of the roles of government and the private sector.
- The broad spectrum of information available from DNR.
- The nature of data sets available in the private sector
- DNR's requirements for property management planning
- Non-traditional uses of spatial information in the private sector
- Use of spatial data within local government

The ACSQ held their annual conference on 14 October 2000 where they discussed a number of important developments in the spatial information industry. The significant ones are:

- The introduction of 12D Model, a powerful terrain modeling, surveying and civil engineering package.
- The development of the Spatial Data Exchange (SDX). The SDX is being developed to provide the commercial exchange of data. It will provide two-way interaction for the buying and selling of data.
- The Federal government Action Agenda is slow getting started however there is lobbying to get the process moving.
- The ACSQ web site www.xyz.au.com has been accepted as the successful tender for the QSIIG sponsored spatial information portal web site. This site will be seeking additional content to represent and appeal to the wider spatial information community.
- QSIIG and ACSQ are currently negotiating to form a single organization to represent private sector spatial business.

For further information on the outcomes of these meetings please contact Les. Searle, Principal, Searle Consulting NQ at Les.Searle@skybiz.com or visit www.skybusiness.com/searle-nq.

OCTOBER 2000 ISA & IEMSA NORTHERN GROUPS MEETING

The Northern Groups of the Institution of Surveyors and Institute of Engineering and Mining Surveyors had their annual combined conference in Townsville on the weekend of 27-29 October. This event has a long and colourful history going back many years, with this years theme dealing with Spatial Data.

The Conference was well attended, with delegates drawn from both the modern Spatial data Industry as well as the conventional surveying interests. Interesting papers were given by speakers covering a variety of topics including Tailoring Your Products to Suit the User, Meta Data, TCC'DCDB (the first in Queensland) and tracing war time relics using historic aerial photography.

The conference formal dinner was held at the Museum of Tropical Queensland, where Allison Mann gave a n interesting talk on the excavation of the wreck of HMS Pandora.

Peter Murphy - Brazier Motti

(Continued from page 1)

bers capability register - continue website development The (GIS in the Community) workshop is a chance for everyone to be involved, particularly consultants who want to show their wares, or anyone who wants to give their project some publicity. This is typical of our aim to keep FUNGIS useful for the techos, the pen pushers, and the GIS wannabees. So get in and help and enjoy. Christmas cheers to all See you at the breakup

Terry

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