

July 2000

"Don't be left in the dark!"

FUNGIS Newsletter

FAR NORTH QUEENSLAND GIS USER GROUP INCORPORATED

CHAIR REPORT

The annual seminar is shaping up as a beauty. We have a good number of speakers, and the topics are all relevant to us in the here and now. It's a measure of our growth that there are so many

local speakers with expertise in knowledge technology, and also that national and state representatives are also keen to contribute (or is it the northern winters).

The program is extremely full, so to make the most of the opportunities I encourage people to come along to the social activities on the Tuesday night. Over previous years the personal contacts made have provided significant benefits. It will be more so this year with more people involved and a

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Celebrating our 10th Anniversary!

As we come up to the 10th anniversary of FUNGIS it is worth reflecting on how it started and some of the original objectives.

FUNGIS first started on 3 March 1988 as a loose group of people with a common interest. From its inception in 1988 to 13 July 1990 three seminars were held but there were no formal meetings or office bearers.

The second recorded meeting was held on 13 July 1990 where ArcInfo and MapInfo sub-groups were formed and a steering committee given the task of formalising the group through incorporation. This meeting was attended by:

Pauline Catt
G. Dale
Alan Hooper
David Lane
Barney Myers
Bob Peever
Mark Sharkey
Alan Stafford
Mike Stoodley
J. Tomlin
P. Wolff

Jaap Correlje
T. Egan
D. James
Owen Lewis
C. O'Neill
P. Poutanen
G. Sloman
L. Stewart
Peter Swain
Steve Turton

The steering committee consisted of:

Peter Swain – Chair
Charles O'Neill
Bob Peever
Barney Myers
Mike Stoodley

This committee formulated a draft constitution and made a number of recommendations to a meeting on 10 August 1990. These recommendations included:

- The size and representation of the executive

- That FUNGIS meet quarterly on the Friday of the second week of the appropriate month.

- That newsletters be published quarterly

- The size of the fees.

Following a meeting on 10 August 1990, application for incorporation as an association was lodged on 15 August 1990. The group was incorporated on 28 September 1990 and Barney Myers was appointed as secretary at a meeting on 15 October 1990.

The objectives of FUNGIS are:

- To offer a forum for members to exchange knowledge, ideas and experience on GIS at a local level.

- To act as a focal point for organisations and individuals to gain information about GIS from outside sources.

- To provide a source of cross-organisational links for those with similar interests in GIS.

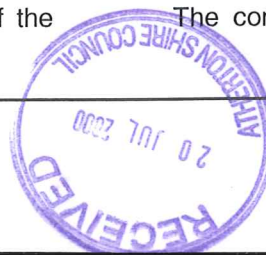
- To promote the use and awareness of GIS to the wider community.

- To provide a forum for discussion of policy issues in GIS and a body to represent the region in policy matters.

The constitution provides for both individual and corporate members who have been proposed and seconded by existing members. Corporate membership is open to organisations with an interest in the development of GIS within the Far North Queensland Region.

The constitution does not limit the

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DSC

META DATA COORDINATOR

The data sharing proposal has taken a turn in direction. CSIRO has shown interest in giving significant support. The CSIRO officers involved were instrumental in the Herbert River Information Centre getting off the ground, and see our project as a step between such local groups, and the broad scale government arrangements (eg QSIC).

The CSIRO support should provide increased impetus to the project, and will certainly contribute some expertise in dealing with community technology issues.

Terry Webb.

Its' Official!

The 'Metadata Co-ordinator position' is no longer a faceless name.

Congratulations Geoff Hunter.

Geoff was successful over a group of high quality applicants and started work from his new abode in DCILGPS, 3rd July.

The purpose of Geoff's position is described as;

- a key element in the Government's objective to increase the completeness of metadata related to spatial information in North Queensland
- to encourage organisations to recognise the importance of metadata for their own business needs.
- to focus Government agencies, private sector and community custodians on collecting metadata and adding it to appropriate directories.

I personally, look forward to Geoff's assistance in putting my metadata into a consolidated and complete system of collection and maintenance...that works! But don't take it from me, let's hear from Geoff...

See you all at the FUNGIS Seminar,

Cheers, Lisa Rutten.

Thanks Lisa!!

Hi to all FUNGIS members.

The Issues

Lisa has listed above, the main aims of this position. It has been created because it has been identified that there is a significant amount of spatially related information that has been captured but not documented and/or listed, particularly in North Queensland.

In recent years, there has been somewhat of an explosion in data acquisition with the rapid development in technology and improved data capture techniques. What has not kept up however, is the capture of adequate documentation pertaining to the information that now exists.

Some of the emerging issues for users with regard to the access and use of spatial information, as stated by Peter Wilson in his FUNGIS Newsletter item 'Data Sharing in Far North' 4th Quarter 1999, are *"Gaps in data, formats of data, cost of data, custodial legalities, data access hoops and just knowing what data exists are a few of the impediments...."*

FUNGIS LAUNCHES NEW LOOK WEBSITE

Can you imagine seeing a Ferrari Testarossa in the fast lane on one of Germany's infamous autobahns, doing 25 K/hr, crunching gears, doing the kangaroo hop with the windscreen wipers working on a sunny afternoon and being driven by a 12 year old girl? Well...that's how I felt when asked to create a web site on the superhighway with a \$1000 worth of software I've never seen before. I had to get there in two weeks and it wasn't going to be pretty!

According to folklore, the first FUNGIS web site was published by Uts Wellbrook in the early to mid 90's, I never saw it, (Web access was restricted to managers who were the only ones allowed to be informed on www.dothootersdotcom) so I had nothing to

compare this site with. But I've seen enough bells and whistles on other web sites to know the standard was up there.

Creating a web site from scratch, begs the first question. "Where do I start?" Lisa came up with the idea of those basic questions, Who?, What?, Where? and When?. Answer those and you've got it half finished. I think "Benefits" was thrown in because we all want to get something out of being a member of FUNGIS.

People read newspapers to find out what's news. They read books and magazines to acquire information and knowledge. The content of a web page is the combination of all of the above. The content of the fungis web page represents us, the

The Benefits To You – Your First Question - "What's in it for Me?"

I will talk in terms of "what is in it for me" because I understand the demands we all have on time and resources these days and that only those issues that have a direct significant and immediate impact on our activities tend to get addressed.

Identifying what information exists, therefore, is critical to using and enhancing your own data and making information more easily accessible to users (even within your own organisation). National Metadata Guidelines have been developed by ANZLIC to standardise metadata capture.

The next steps in resolving any of these issues above are for you -

1. for you to be able to effectively catalogue and manage the data you have (your assets) and
2. for you to know what other data exists that is available and suitable to enhance your data for your business needs.

This starts with Metadata. Metadata is data about data ie. a description of the characteristics of data that has been collected for a specific purpose.

Here is the irony though, if your access to land information is to be

maximised, adequate descriptions of the characteristics of all geographically referenced datasets must be available. No matter who you are or where you work, this essentially starts with your datasets.

In discussions I have had with some of you to date, it seems that you are already aware that this needs to happen and understand the reasons why.

The Metadata Coordinator

This role (12 month temporary) is the first of its type to be created in Queensland. My role is to coordinate and provide assistance wherever possible for you capture your metadata.

While it is clear what results are required, the various activities I will need to undertake in assisting you may vary depending on your needs. These will become clearer and evolve as I talk with you. I will commence however by undertaking the following activities—

- Setting up effective two-way communication with you to identify what your needs and issues are and take action to remove any hurdles.
- Gain the necessary support from your senior managers.
- Assist spatial data custodians in

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NOTE

State Government has progressively been changing numbers for all departments to a new phone system. For a few weeks there, there was an interchange period where callers were redirected to the new numbers, but for some departments (such as DCILGPS), that changeover period has now finished... and now we seem to be uncontactable.

If you are experiencing trouble try visiting www.govnet.qld.gov.au and you should be able to get the new phone numbers there.

Cheers,
Lisa Rutten

Far North Queensland GIS Users Group Inc., so you are the content of the site. It requires your news, your information and your knowledge to share with the rest of us.

I see the site being a living thing, something that is constantly changing and being updated. If you log on to the web site twice in a row (in a reasonable period) and don't see any changes then I have failed, or, have you?

Thanks go to Lisa Rutten for not only talking me into this, but also for getting on my back to do something about it (I'd rather be fishing or playing golf Lisa), and also to Robert Crossley of Wild Lime for hosting the site.

Geoff Mills.

www.trinitysoftware.com.au/fungis/

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

FUNGIS makes no guarantee as to the accuracy or completeness of information contained within this publication. The spelling mistakes are left in for people who need to correct others to make their life fulfilled.

Meta Data Officer...

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metadata capture by providing technical support, tools and advice.

I am looking forward to working with you and offering any assistance I can and to seeing you at the FUNGIS Users Group Seminar. In the interim, if you would like to discuss any aspect of Metadata, my contact details are -

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10 years of FUNGIS...

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geographical area covered by FUNGIS however the original draft constitution was distributed to Cardwell, Johnstone, Mareeba and Mulgrave Shires for comment. Since the incorporation of FUNGIS, members from the Cairns and Tableland area have dominated the executive. The area from Cardwell north to Mossman including Cairns and the Atherton Tablelands has generally been accepted as the area covered by FUNGIS.

Although the area covered by FUNGIS is limited to Far North Queensland, membership has been encouraged and accepted from any individual or organisation with an interest in this area. At various times FUNGIS has included members from Weipa to Brisbane.

FUNGIS has come a long way since our humble beginnings in 1990 and there have been significant achievements in attaining our goals. As we look to the next 10 years we need to redefine our goals in a changing environment.

Les Searle.

NQSDUG NQ Spatial Data User Group

Well, the North Queensland Spatial Data User Group is coming along just nicely! It has been a positive year by our standards. So far we have managed to meet once every two months (even during cyclonic conditions) and there is definitely a core set of individuals determined to make things happen.

Though we are only half way through the year we have:

- Started up an 'e-group' at 'onelist'. This forum provides an easy form of communication and discussion for our members.
- Investigated the possible incorporation of the group.
- Decided to host a local 'Spatial Data Directory'
- Assisted in organising a GDA workshop in Townsville, for which we were lucky enough to have Peter Todd from the DNR as the key note speaker.
- Put together a presentation for the FUNGIS annual seminar (thanks mostly to the TCC).
- Accepted an offer to present at the annual Northern and Central Groups Conference (of Surveyors). The theme is spatial data and somehow I was silly enough to be roped into the organising committee.

I look forward to discussing these issues and more when we congregate for the Annual FUNGIS Seminar

Raneir Melick
Brazier Motti

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more packed

program.

The Townsville based North Queensland Data Users Group has developed strongly during the year, and will again be contributing to the seminar.

It's the end of a year as chair, and I've enjoyed it. The time has certainly given me an eye opener to a lot happening, and even more that would be good to make happen. The AGM will be squeezed into the seminar. Don't pass up the opportunity to nominate yourself or others who would like to contribute to the directions of the spatial data industry in the Far North.

Cheers
Terry Webb.

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