

# Accreditation of Surveyors

## Procedure

**SIG/2013/504**

**Version 1.05**

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## Version History

Date	Version	Author	Description/Comments
16/02/2012	1.00		Replacing former NRW policy RPS/2004/1704. Amended change in departmental name.
13/04/2012	1.01		Updating Survey Plan Processing and Pre-Lodgement Advice policy no. from RPS/2004/1706 to SIG/2010/4272
01/08/2013	1.02		Rebranding due to departmental name change and organisational structure changes.
18/12/2015	1.03		Updating Survey Plan Processing and Pre-Lodgement Advice policy no. from SIG/2010/4272 to SIG/2013/565  Updating Accreditation of Surveyors policy no. from SIG/2012/5041 to SIG/2013/504  Updating register of accredited surveyors be maintained by principal survey advisor, Cadastral and Geodetic Services  Quantifying monitoring process
01/02/2019	1.04		Rebranded to new template due to departmental name change.
27/04/2020	1.05		Updating minimum requirements needed to apply for accreditation.  Updating requirements for retaining accreditation, including different requirements based on lodgement numbers (to reflect removal of provisional category).  Removal of provisional category.

## Approval

<p>Jim Sloan</p> <p>Acting Director of Surveys</p>	<p>27 April 2020</p>
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## **1. Purpose**

To allow for the recognition that a particular surveyor does surveys of a high standard, with the objective that an accredited surveyor produces a registrable plan and a quality field product at least 95% of the time.

To provide a quality management strategy whereby the integrity of all surveys and survey plans is achieved prior to lodgement with the department, rather than as a result of a departmental internal plan monitoring process.

## **2. Rationale**

Detailed examination of the survey content of plans lodged by surveyors who qualify for accreditation is not effective risk management.

Surveyors who have appropriate procedures in place to ensure the quality of surveys and plans, and who demonstrate their capacity to produce quality surveys and plans, represent a low risk for the land registry and the cadastre. Such surveyors may become accredited.

Quality assurance is not mandatory for accreditation. However, it is anticipated that applicants who have documented their processes for cadastral surveys will be able to readily demonstrate their capacity to produce quality surveys, and hence be accredited with less effort.

Accredited surveyors who are not quality assured are encouraged to extend their quality systems in accordance with the relevant Australian Standards.

Accredited surveyors may endorse plans in respect of survey content and submit the endorsed plans to the department prior to lodgement.

Submission of copies of plans prior to lodgement enables the department to enter information into the relevant systems and carry out the necessary checks so that any issues may be resolved before the plan is lodged.

## **3. Procedure**

### **3.1 Accreditation**

The system of accreditation should not be viewed as a process of registration. It is a means to recognise surveyors who demonstrate that they produce a quality field product and their surveys are consistently of a registrable standard.

An individual or corporation registered as a cadastral surveyor by the Surveyors Board of Queensland may be accredited in accordance with this procedure. Accreditation of a corporation does not infer accreditation of individual cadastral surveyors within that corporation.

Where a corporation is accredited, the corporation determines who within the corporation endorses survey plans on their behalf.

Assessment of new applications and re-applications following withdrawal of accreditation and the review of the performance of accredited surveyors will be conducted twice a year, during assessment periods in February and August.

### **3.2 Application for accreditation**

There is no prescribed proforma on which to apply for accreditation. The criteria for accreditation below in section 3.3 should be addressed when preparing an application.

Where a surveyor has applied to the department for accreditation, the application shall be determined by the local principal surveyor in consultation with the Accreditation Committee.

The local principal surveyor shall undertake and/or supervise all investigations necessary to determine the level of compliance with the criteria for accreditation (section 3.3).

The applicant shall be notified of the result of the application by the end of the month in which the application is assessed. Such notification shall include a copy of all supporting information used in determining the application.

The application may be approved or rejected.

A single register of accredited surveyors shall be maintained by the Director of Surveys.

Surveyors whose applications for accreditation have been rejected may re-apply for accreditation when they can demonstrate that their processes have been modified to address any deficiencies identified in considering their previous application. Such applications will be assessed during the following assessment period in accordance with the procedures set out herein.

If an application for accreditation is denied, the applicant may make a submission to the Director of Surveys seeking an independent review of their application (for contact details, see section 6.4).

### **3.3 Criteria for accreditation**

The principal surveyor shall assess an application based on the following assessment criteria. The following list is not exhaustive nor is every item compulsory to every application.

The assessment criteria are:

- past performance as evidenced by their requisition rate. The minimum requirement is for at least five (5) recent survey plans lodged in Titles Registry without requisitions.
- the surveyor uses an audit procedure and checklist addressing, as a minimum, the content of the Plan Registration Compliance Checklist (Form 10)
- demonstrated knowledge of the department's Cadastral Survey Requirements and the Registrar of Titles Directions for the Preparation of Plans
- cadastral surveying experience

### **3.4 Monitoring accreditation status**

Principal surveyors, as part of the Accreditation Committee, will monitor the standards of surveys of all accredited surveyors, twice a year, during the assessment periods in February and August. A review of the accreditation status of an individual surveyor or corporation can occur at any time when matters warrant that review. Any review will result in one of the following outcomes:

- No action if the standard of surveys is acceptable. Surveyors who lodge more than 10 plans in the past 6 months with critical requisition rates less than 5% would fall in this category.

Surveyors who lodge 10 or less plans in the past 6 months with critical requisition rates less than 10% would fall in this category.

- Written advice that there are concerns in relation to some aspects of the surveys, but no action to be taken at this time. It is anticipated surveyors who lodge more than 10 plans in the past 6 months with critical requisition rates of 5-6% would fall in this category. Surveyors who lodge 10 or less plans in the past 6 months with critical requisition rates of 10-12% would fall in this category.
- Written advice that there are concerns in relation to the standard of surveys, and asking the surveyor to show cause why their accreditation should not be withdrawn. (The process for issuing a show cause notice is set out in section 6.4.) It is anticipated surveyors who lodge more than 10 plans in the past 6 months with critical requisition rates exceeding 6% would fall in this category. Surveyors who lodge 10 or less plans in the past 6 months with critical requisition rates exceeding 12% would fall in this category.

Sample text for letters is given at section 6.

The following matters will be considered by principal surveyors and the Accreditation Committee in reviewing the performance of accredited surveyors:

- critical requisition rates above 5% in any reporting period (or 10 % having regard to the number of plans lodged or deposited in the reporting period)
- excessive non critical requisitions
- copies of plans not being supplied immediately after endorsement
- copies of endorsed plans not being received prior to lodgement of the original plan
- failure to deposit re-endorsed copies of amended plans, including a copy of the plan with annotated changes.
- failure to attend to post registration corrections within the required timeframe.

### **3.5 Withdrawal of accreditation**

Where performance standards are not being maintained by an accredited surveyor, following discussion with the Accreditation Committee, the principal surveyor will contact the accredited surveyor advising of concerns.

If the concerns are not addressed satisfactorily, following discussion with the Accreditation Committee, the principal surveyor will issue a show cause notice to the surveyor advising that the department has concerns that the quality of surveys is not consistent with the required standard. On receipt of the response to the show cause notice, or if no response is received within 10 working days, the principal surveyor will refer the matter to the Accreditation Committee for them to consider whether the surveyor's accreditation should be withdrawn.

Where the surveyor's accreditation is withdrawn, the principal surveyor will notify the surveyor of that decision and their right to appeal the decision.

### **3.6 Appeal**

It is expected that, through greater levels of communication and well-documented standards, the appeals process will be used infrequently, if at all.

Where appropriate, a surveyor may appeal to the Director of Surveys against any decision by the principal surveyor or Accreditation Committee concerned with the accreditation of that surveyor.

The Director of Surveys may either uphold the decision to withdraw their accreditation or overturn the decision. The Director of Surveys will notify the surveyor of that decision, and if applicable, the date that the surveyor's accreditation is reinstated.

Regardless of the outcome of an appeal against withdrawal of accreditation, no compensation will be payable.

### **3.7 Re-applying for accreditation following withdrawal of accreditation**

Where an accredited surveyor has had their accreditation withdrawn, the surveyor cannot re-apply for accreditation for a period of six months from the date that their accreditation is withdrawn. That surveyor can only re-apply for accreditation when they can demonstrate that their processes have been modified to address any deficiencies that led to their accreditation being withdrawn. Such applications will be considered during the accreditation assessment period subsequent to their re-application.

## **4. Endorsing a plan**

Section 3.3 of the department's Cadastral Survey Requirements, being a Standard under the *Survey and Mapping Infrastructure Act 2003* sets out the requirements for endorsing plans and provision of copies to the department.

## **5. Record keeping - departmental files for accredited surveyors**

The procedure Survey Plan Processing and Pre-Lodgement Advice SIG/2013/565 sets out the requirements for departmental record keeping in relation to processing of plans.

Under this Accreditation of Surveyors procedure, an appeal mechanism is provided in relation to decisions made regarding an application for accreditation, or regarding the accreditation status of a surveyor. Where a decision is made, the reasons for the department's decision must be recorded, together with copies of any information relied on to make the decision, and the principal surveyor will store that information in a subfolder on the Survprog network drive under 1.6.2 Surveyors Performance.

## **6. Sample letters**

When principal surveyors review the standard of surveys being submitted by accredited surveyors, if there are concerns the surveyor should be advised in writing of the outcome of the review.

Following is the suggested text for letters.

### **6.1 Sample letter: review of accredited surveyor - performance acceptable**

Accreditation of surveyors is recognition by this department that a surveyor produces surveys of a high standard and adheres to the department's standards and the Registrar of Titles' requirements for surveys lodged in this department.

As an accredited surveyor, your surveys have been monitored in accordance with departmental procedure Survey Plan Processing and Pre-Lodgement Advice SIG/2013/565. This follows your accreditation under departmental procedure Accreditation of Surveyors SIG/2013/504, which is available from the policy register on the department's website at [www.dnrme.qld.gov.au/home/about-us/policies](http://www.dnrme.qld.gov.au/home/about-us/policies).

Attached for your information is a copy of your performance record for the period xx/xx/xxxx to xx/xx/xxxx. Based on this performance, your accreditation status has been reviewed and your accreditation status will remain unchanged. You are to be commended for your efforts and it is hoped that your exemplary record can be maintained.

Should you wish to discuss this review, please contact me on telephone (07) xxxx xxxx.

## **6.2 Sample letter: review of accredited surveyor - concerns, but no action at this time**

Accreditation of surveyors is recognition by this department that a surveyor produces surveys of a high standard and adheres to the department's standards and the Registrar of Titles' requirements for surveys lodged in this department.

As an accredited surveyor, your surveys have been monitored in accordance with departmental procedure Survey Plan Processing and Pre-Lodgement Advice SIG/2013/565. This follows your accreditation under departmental procedure Accreditation of Surveyors SIG/2013/504, which is available from the policy register on the department's website at [www.dnrme.qld.gov.au/home/about-us/policies](http://www.dnrme.qld.gov.au/home/about-us/policies).

Attached for your information is a copy of your performance record for the period xx/xx/xxxx to xx/xx/xxxx. Based on this performance, your accreditation status has been reviewed and your accreditation status will remain unchanged. However, be advised that any rate higher than five per cent is not considered satisfactory and will result in you being asked to show cause as to why your accreditation should not be withdrawn.

Should you wish to discuss this review, please contact me on telephone (07) xxxx xxxx.

## **6.3 Sample letter: review of accredited surveyor - show cause**

Accreditation of surveyors is recognition by this department that a surveyor produces surveys of a high standard and adheres to the department's standards and the Registrar of Titles' requirements for surveys lodged in this department.

As an accredited surveyor, your surveys have been monitored in accordance with departmental procedure Survey Plan Processing and Pre-Lodgement Advice SIG/2013/565. This follows your accreditation under departmental procedure Accreditation of Surveyors SIG/2013/504, which is available from the department's website at [www.dnrme.qld.gov.au/home/about-us/policies](http://www.dnrme.qld.gov.au/home/about-us/policies).

Attached for your information is a copy of your performance record for the period xx/xx/xxxx to xx/xx/xxxx. Please note that any rate higher than five per cent is not considered satisfactory. Based on this performance, your accreditation status has been reviewed and your accreditation status does not appear justified. You are asked to show cause within ten working days why your accreditation should not be removed. If a satisfactory response is not received within 10 working days, action will be taken to withdraw your accreditation.

Should you wish to discuss this review, please contact me on telephone (07) xxxx xxxx.

#### **6.4 Sample letter: withdrawal of accreditation**

Accreditation of surveyors is recognition by this department that a surveyor produces surveys of a high standard and adheres to the department's standards and the Registrar of Titles' requirements for surveys lodged in this department.

As an accredited surveyor, your surveys have been monitored in accordance with departmental procedure Survey Plan Processing and Pre-Lodgement Advice SIG/2013/565. This follows your accreditation under departmental procedure Accreditation of Surveyors SIG/2013/504, which is available from the department's website at [www.dnrme.qld.gov.au/home/about-us/policies](http://www.dnrme.qld.gov.au/home/about-us/policies).

You were notified that your performance record for the period xx/xx/xxxx to xx/xx/xxxx was not satisfactory and was asked to show cause within ten working days why your accreditation should not be removed. Your reply has not demonstrated that your processes have been modified or are capable of addressing any deficiencies that led to your current performance record. Therefore your accreditation has been withdrawn, effective as xx/xx/xxxx.

If you wish to appeal this decision, you can do so in writing to the Director of Surveys at the following address:

Director of Surveys  
Department of Natural Resources, Mines and Energy (DNRME)  
GPO Box 2454  
Brisbane Qld 4001

or

Director of Surveys  
Surveying@dnrme.qld.gov.au

#### **7. Responsibilities**

**The principal surveyors shall be responsible for:**

- assessing all applications for accreditation
- investigating standards of survey, in so far as they affect the registration of plans and the integrity of the cadastre
- monitoring the standards of survey of accredited surveyors at a local level, at least six-monthly
- providing information and recommendations to the Accreditation Committee.

**Cadastral surveyors shall be responsible for:**

- preparing applications for accreditation in accordance with the criteria for accreditation (see 1.2).

**Accredited surveyors shall be responsible for:**

- endorsing plans that are suitable for registration
- complying with the requirements of this document.

**The Accreditation Committee shall be responsible for:**

- coordinating the accreditation and review process
- monitoring the state-wide consistency of the application of accreditation
- reviewing the status of accredited surveyors, and where appropriate removing their accreditation
- monitoring the effectiveness of the accreditation system, and recommending further refinements as required.

**8. Definitions**

**Accreditation**

Recognition by the department that a surveyor consistently produces surveys of a high standard, that are compliant with the relevant legislation and requirements for plans lodged with the department.

**Accreditation Committee**

A committee responsible for coordinating the accreditation process, including reviewing the status of accredited surveyors, monitoring the effectiveness of the accreditation system, and recommending further refinements as required. The committee consists of the principal surveyors from the regional offices and Titles Registry.

**Critical errors**

Critical errors are defined as those which would:

- prevent the action from proceeding
- have a major impact on the integrity of the Land Registry
- have a significant impact on the integrity of the land boundary system.

**Department**

Department of Natural Resources, Mines and Energy

**Deposited plan or DP**

A copy of an endorsed plan that has been submitted to the department in accordance with SIG/2013/565.

**Endorsed plan**

A plan where Panel 11 of Form 21 has been completed by an accredited surveyor (or liaison officer) indicating that the plan has been checked and is acceptable for registration.

**Lodged plan**

A lodged plan is defined as a plan that has been submitted to the department for registration under an act, such as the *Land Title Act 1994*, *Land Act 1994*, *Building Units and Group Titles Act 1980*, *Body Corporate and Community Management Act 1997*, etcetera.

**Plan**

A record of a cadastral survey prepared on Forms 21 (Land Title Regulations 1994).

**Principal surveyor**

Principal surveyors or principal surveying operatives of the department.

**9. References**

SIG/2013/565 Survey Plan Processing and Pre-Lodgement Advice

Cadastral Survey Requirements

Registrar of Titles Directions for the Preparation of Plans

**10. Legislation**

*Surveyors Act 2003*

*Survey and Mapping Infrastructure Act 2003*

Cadastral Survey Standards and Guidelines