

# Accreditation of Surveyors

## Procedure

SIG/2013/504  
Version 1.03



## Table of Contents

<i>Version History</i>	<b>1</b>
<i>Approval</i>	<b>1</b>
<i>Purpose</i>	<b>2</b>
<i>Rationale</i>	<b>2</b>
<i>Procedure</i>	<b>3</b>
<i>Responsibilities</i>	<b>10</b>
<i>Definitions</i>	<b>11</b>
<i>References</i>	<b>12</b>
<i>Legislation</i>	<b>12</b>

## Version History

Date	Version	Author	Description/Comments
16/2/12	1.00		Replacing former NRW policy RPS/2004/1704. Amended change in departmental name.
13/4/12	1.01		Updating Survey Plan Processing and Pre-Lodgement Advice policy no. from RPS/2004/1706 to SIG/2010/4272
1/8/13	1.02		Rebranding due to departmental name change and organisational structure changes.
18/12/15	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

## Approval

Russell Priebbenow Director, Cadastral and Geodetic Services	13 April 2012
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## 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 every 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.

## 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. Plan details will be recorded in the appropriate administrative databases.

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.

An accredited surveyor may choose to submit plans for Pre-Lodgement Advice (See Survey Plan Processing and Pre-Lodgement Advice SIG/2013/565), however it is anticipated that this option will be the exception rather than the rule.



# Procedure

## 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 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, a liaison officer shall be nominated as a point of contact between the corporation and the department.

### 1.1 Application for accreditation

There is no prescribed proforma on which to apply for accreditation. The criteria for accreditation below in section 1.2 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.

The local principal surveyor shall undertake and/or supervise all investigations necessary to determine the level of compliance with the criteria for accreditation (section 1.2).

When assessing an application for accreditation, the local principal surveyor shall seek the views of all other principal surveyors prior to making a decision.

The applicant shall be notified of the result of the application. Such notification shall include a copy of all supporting information used in determining the application.

The application may be fully or provisionally approved, or rejected.

Where a surveyor has been given provisional accreditation, such approval shall have the same status as full accreditation but a provisionally accredited surveyor will have additional obligations as set out in section 1.4.

Provisionally accredited surveyors shall be subject to a further review (see section 1.4).

Once a surveyor is accredited, all offices of the department are to consider the surveyor to be accredited.

A single register of accredited surveyors shall be maintained by the principal survey advisor, Cadastral and Geodetic Services.

[Departmental note: It is important that the person maintaining the register of accredited surveyors is also the Module Administrator for Surveys JTS of MIS.]

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 processed in accordance with the procedures set out herein.

If an application for accreditation is denied, the applicant may make a submission to the Accreditation Committee seeking an independent review of their application.

## 1.2 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 intended to be weighted in accordance with the order that they appear in this list:

- past performance as evidenced by their requisition rate. This shall not be a purely numerical test, but consider the various aspects and complexities of the plans lodged
- 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
- demonstrated quality field procedures
- existing second or third party Quality Assurance Accreditation
- involvement with industry sponsored workshops that deal with cadastral surveying and/or requirements of the department
- performance reports resulting from surveys undertaken under contract
- cadastral surveying experience
- variety of actions handled by the applicant
- local knowledge of the surveyor's operating environment.

## 1.3 Monitoring accreditation status

Principal surveyors should monitor the standards of survey of accredited surveyors at a local level, at least six-monthly. The review should be based on surveyors who have lodged more than 10 plans in the past 12 months. This review should result in one of the following outcomes:

- No action if standard of surveys acceptable. Surveyors with requisition rates less than 5% 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 with requisition rates exceeding 5% would fall in this category.
- Written advice that there are concerns in relation to some aspects of the surveys, and accreditation reduced to provisional. It is anticipated surveyors with requisition rates exceeding 15% 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 a recommendation for withdrawal of accreditation should not be forwarded to the Accreditation Committee. (The process for issuing a show cause notice is set out in section 4.4.) It is anticipated surveyors with requisition rates exceeding 20% would fall in this category.

Sample text for letters is given at section 4.

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

- critical requisition rates above five per cent in any reporting period of three months or greater (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.

## 1.4 Provisional accreditation

There are two situations in which a surveyor may hold provisional accreditation:

- an applicant for accreditation may be granted provisional accreditation, so that the quality of the surveyor's surveys can be assessed further
- a surveyor's accreditation may be reduced to provisional where performance standards are not being maintained by an accredited surveyor.

When a surveyor has a status of provisional accreditation, each deposited copy of an endorsed plan, including copies of re-endorsed plans, must be accompanied by the following:

for any plan

- completed Form 10 or equivalent
- lot calculations
- field notes, if relevant
- if the plan includes a survey of an ambulatory boundary, a report addressing the required items
- SmartMap used at the time of certification
- if requested by the principal surveyor, a reinstatement report or an annotated copy of the plan
- if requested by the principal surveyor, a list of the plans used in undertaking the survey

for state land plans

- letter of offer, including diagram (if applicable).

When provisionally accredited surveyors deposit/lodge plans with the department, the department will assess the plans in accordance with the Plan Registration Compliance Checklist (Form 10).

## 1.5 Review of provisionally accredited surveyors

The principal surveyor must review the performance of a provisionally accredited surveyor in accordance with the procedure below.

Such review shall be made within six calendar months of the provisional accreditation, or sooner if the surveyor has deposited five plans following the provisional accreditation.

The principal surveyor's review of a provisionally accredited surveyor should consider the following:

- during the assessment period, it is important that no surveys deposited with the department have critical errors - these may prevent full accreditation being granted
- the criteria for accreditation in section 1.2.

At the completion of the period the surveyor will be advised in writing of the principal surveyor's findings.

In the case where a non-accredited surveyor has applied for accreditation and the surveyor has been given provisional accreditation, one of the following will occur at the completion of the assessment period:

- the surveyor will be upgraded to fully accredited
- the application will be refused
- the local principal surveyor may grant one extension of the assessment period as defined above.

In the case where an accredited surveyor has been given provisional accreditation, one of the following will occur at the completion of the assessment period:

- the surveyor will be upgraded to fully accredited
- the surveyor will be requested to show cause why a recommendation should not be made to the Accreditation Committee that the surveyor's accreditation be withdrawn.

## **1.6 Withdrawal of accreditation**

Where performance standards are not being maintained by an accredited surveyor, the principal surveyor should, in the first instance, contact the accredited surveyor advising of concerns. This could include reducing the surveyor's accreditation to provisional.

If the concerns are not addressed satisfactorily, the principal surveyor may 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.

## **1.7 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 Accreditation Committee against any decision by the principal surveyor concerned with the accreditation of that surveyor.

Appeals against a decision by the Accreditation Committee shall be heard by the following panel:

- Director, Cadastral and Geodetic Services
- Registrar of Titles
- Chair, Surveyors Board of Queensland.

Should an appeal against withdrawal of accreditation be upheld, no compensation will be payable.





## 2 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.

## 3 Record keeping - personal files for accredited surveyors

The procedure Survey Plan Processing and Pre-Lodgement Advice SIG/2013/565 sets out the requirements for 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 decision should be recorded, together with copies of any information relied on to make the decision.

## 4 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.

### ***4.1 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.nrm.qld.gov.au](http://www.nrm.qld.gov.au) <<http://www.nrm.qld.gov.au/>>

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.

### ***4.2 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.nrm.qld.gov.au](http://www.nrm.qld.gov.au)

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 further reviews will be conducted.

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

#### ***4.3 Sample letter: review of accredited surveyor - concerns, and reduce to provisional***

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.nrm.qld.gov.au](http://www.nrm.qld.gov.au)

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 will be changed to provisionally accredited. Provisional accreditation will be reviewed within six months or sooner if you lodge five plans. Following that review, either:

- (a) you will be granted full accreditation; or
- (b) you will be asked to show cause why your accreditation should not be withdrawn.

Please note that under provisional accreditation, each copy of an endorsed plan that is deposited with the department must be accompanied by the following:

for any plan

- completed Form 10 or equivalent
- lot calculations
- field notes, if relevant
- if the plan includes a survey of an ambulatory boundary, a report addressing the required items
- SmartMap used at the time of certification
- if requested by the principal surveyor, a reinstatement report or an annotated copy of the plan
- if requested by the principal surveyor, a list of the plans used in undertaking the survey

for state land plans

- letter of offer, including diagram (if applicable).

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

#### **4.4 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.nrm.qld.gov.au](http://www.nrm.qld.gov.au)

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. Your reply will be provided to the Accreditation Committee for their consideration.

In the meantime your accreditation status will be provisionally accredited. If you wish to appeal this decision, you can do so in writing to the Accreditation Committee at the following address:

Chair Accreditation Committee  
c/- Operational Policy, Land and Spatial Information  
GPO Box 2454  
Brisbane Qld 4001

Please note that under provisional accreditation, each copy of an endorsed plan that is deposited with the department must be accompanied by the following:

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- completed Form 10 or equivalent
- lot calculations
- field notes
- if the plan includes a survey of an ambulatory boundary, a report addressing the required items
- SmartMap used at the time of certification
- if requested by the principal surveyor, a reinstatement report or an annotated copy of the plan
- if requested by the principal surveyor, a list of the plans used in undertaking the survey

for state land plans

- letter of offer, including diagram (if applicable).

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



## 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 three-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.

### **Liaison officers shall be responsible for:**

- endorsing plans on behalf of the accredited corporation
- coordinating activities between the department and a corporation which is seeking accreditation or has been accredited
- ensuring the timely distribution of information between the department and the relevant branch offices of the corporation.

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

- coordinating the accreditation 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.



## Definitions

### Accreditation

Recognition by the department that a surveyor produces surveys of a high standard, that is, 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 departmental officers and a nominee from each of the SSSIQ and the SBQ.

### 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 and Mines

### 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.

### Liaison officer

A person appointed by a corporation registered as a surveyor, where the corporation is an accredited surveyor, whose role is to coordinate with the department on matters relating to the processing of endorsed plans.

### 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 Form 21 (Land Title Regulations 1994).



## **Principal surveyor**

Principal surveyors or principal surveying operatives of the department.

## **SBQ**

Surveyors Board of Queensland

## **SSSIQ**

Surveying and Spatial Sciences Institute, Queensland Region

## **References**

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

Cadastral Survey Requirements

Registrar of Titles Directions for the Preparation of Plans

## **Legislation**

*Surveyors Act 2003*

*Survey and Mapping Infrastructure Act 2003*

Cadastral Survey Standards and Guidelines