

Geographic Names News

Message from the Registrar of Geographic Names



Welcome to the first Geographic Names Newsletter since the Office of Geographic Names (OGN), along with the other Land Victoria business units, became part of the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP).

Associated with this machinery of government change was the allocation of responsibility for the *Geographic Place Name Act 1998* to the Minister for Planning, the Hon. Richard Wynne, who has already demonstrated a keen interest in naming issues.

A major focus for the OGN in 2015 and extending into 2016 is the statutory five yearly review of the *Guidelines for Geographic Names*. This is an important body of work, which aims to achieve a best practice outcome for naming places in Victoria. I am especially grateful for the committee members' dedicated efforts and the stakeholders' contributions from across the state.

The ANZAC Commemorative Naming Project came to the fore earlier this year, with the centenary of the Gallipoli landing on 25 April 2015 generating widespread media coverage. In the following update it is pleasing to note that 66 per cent of Victoria's municipal councils benefited from the provision of government grants to fund ANZAC-related naming research. The ANZAC centenary program extends through to 2018 and there is still an opportunity for municipalities not yet involved to participate.

The remaining informative articles are more administrative in nature; however, of most significance is the current uncertainty about the naming authority for waterways in Victoria and the inconsistency between Vicmap's and VICNAMES' data. Given the implications for effective cultural heritage management, timely resolution of these matters is imperative.

In conclusion, I wish to commend Mr Phil Carter, Asset Database Officer at Warrnambool City Council, for his initiative to research and upload the history of Warrnambool's road names. It is only in the past year that VICNAMES has had a road history capability and there are minimal entries, to date. However, Phil's effort is a great example to follow for other municipalities wishing to preserve their road names' history and satisfy frequent public enquiries about road names' origins.

John E. Tulloch, Registrar of Geographic Names

August 2015

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Naming guidelines review

The OGN is currently undertaking a review of the *Guidelines for Geographic Names 2010 Version 2* (the guidelines), in compliance with Section 6 of the *Geographic Place Names Act 1998* (the Act).

The major review in 2008–09 resulted in the *Guidelines for Geographic Names 2010*. The Guidelines Review 2015 Committee consists of members of the Geographic Place Names Advisory Panel, one emergency services representative from the Emergency Services Telecommunications

Authority (ESTA) and two local government representatives nominated by the Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV).

The guidelines' review has included the OGN contacting and engaging stakeholders through letters and emails, as well as workshops held around the state. Six workshops were held with more than 80 attendees and more than 300 comments received. Our request for submissions has now closed. The Guidelines Review 2015 Committee and Indigenous Names Committee

are now considering the comments received and will soon begin work on the updated guidelines.

The first draft is expected to be made available for review and further comment before the end of 2015. This will be your final chance to suggest changes to the guidelines. The updated guidelines are expected to be published in 2016.

ANZAC Commemorative Naming Project



Out of a total of 79 Victorian municipalities, 52 received grants to assist with commemorative naming research.

The OGN has recently received progress reports from municipal councils participating in the project. There are some great stories and projects being undertaken, from recognising existing Anzac-related street names and features, to renaming streets and geographic features with Anzac-themed names. Historical societies, RSLs, schools,

land surveyors, developers and members of the public have all played a role in making this project a success.

The project is being promoted by the State Government's Veterans Branch on the [Anzac Centenary](http://www.anzacentenary.vic.gov.au) web page (www.anzacentenary.vic.gov.au), alongside other government-backed projects.

If you wish you can use the Victorian Government's motif (www.anzacentenary.vic.gov.au/branding), which has been approved for municipalities' use on street and feature signage to commemorate WWI veterans. Although the prime focus is on the WWI centenary, this project recognises all wars and peace-keeping initiatives, as well

as those people who displayed the Anzac spirit. Advice will be provided in the future about use of a motif for post-WW1 commemorative initiatives.

Not all the funds provided by the Veterans Affairs Branch have been allocated. OGN is currently approaching all councils that may be able to benefit from a grant or additional funding.

With the project extending through to the end of the Anzac centenary period in 2018, the opportunity still exists to name features, localities and roads as a lasting legacy for all Victorians.



Principle 1(I) Using commercial and business names

Under Principle 1(I) Using commercial and business names, naming authorities should not name places after commercial businesses, trade names or non-profit organisations.

Exceptions do apply, however, if the business or organisation has had an association with the area over a substantial time-period and is held in high regard by the community. In these circumstances, the naming authority must apply in writing to the Registrar to seek an exemption from this principle, prior to commencing any public consultation or submitting a naming proposal to the OGN. The naming authority must

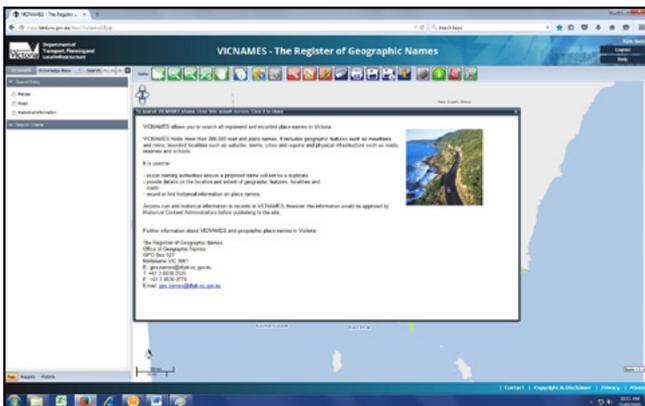
outline in the exemption request reasons for proposing the name, why it is supported, its link to place and provide evidence of the business's or organisation's association with the area.

The OGN receives several requests to name features, roads and localities after businesses that are of historical significance to the area, but no longer exist. These names are acceptable because they meet the requirements under Principle 1(G) Linking the name to the place. A request for exemption is not required for these cases, particularly if the business operated in the 1800s. For businesses that

existed more recently or still exist, an exemption request is required from the naming authority prior to submitting a naming proposal. For example, if the business existed within the last 50 years.

The names of residential (and industrial) estates are considered to be commercial in nature and therefore are not usually permitted for use in relation to road, feature and locality naming. To use the name of an estate, a request for an exemption must be submitted to the Registrar for consideration.

Victorian waterways



The OGN has identified a unique waterway naming problem. There are waterways named in Vicmap's Hydro layer that are inconsistent with the names in VICNAMES, Victoria's official register of geographic names. In some instances, the names do not even exist in VICNAMES.

Under the Aboriginal Heritage Regulations 2007, only waterways named in VICNAMES have the

potential to be associated with a Cultural Heritage Management Plan (CHMP). The problem has been highlighted by areas of cultural heritage sensitivity existing along stretches of waterways not registered in VICNAMES, which

potentially averts the requirements for a CHMP and jeopardises their preservation.

The OGN is working with DELWP's Information Services Branch (Vicmap), the Office of Water and the Office of Aboriginal Affairs Victoria (OAAV) to resolve this problem. As an interim solution, OAAV is in the process of identifying waterways of particular concern and informing OGN through the

Notification and Editing Service (NES). In turn, the OGN has sent NES requests to the relevant municipal councils to determine the locally known name of a waterway, together with a letter explaining the issue. By actioning the NES request municipal councils will facilitate the updating of VICNAMES and Vicmap Hydro with named waterways. This will ensure that CHMPs are undertaken, where necessary, and cultural heritage sites are protected.

As well as this interim measure, the OGN is in the process of determining the most appropriate naming authorities for waterways in Victoria – municipal councils, catchment management authorities or a combination of both.

Victorian waterfalls

The OGN and ISD are also receiving data through NES that identifies incorrectly named and/or located waterfalls across Victoria. This information is collected by a dedicated team of researchers, which is investigating the location and historical naming of waterfalls within Victoria. This voluntary team, comprised of members of the public with an interest in the accurate documentation of waterfall data, has been contributing to the Vicmap hydro and waterfall enhancement program for around 10 years. The OGN updated waterfall names and locations in bulk in 2011, taking data from the authors of *250 Victorian Waterfalls*.

Members of the research team used GPS coordinates to record the exact location of the waterfall and can be considered an authoritative source for determining a waterfall's location. Using historical records, the team has also investigated the names of these waterfalls and, on occasion, requested that a name be added to a waterfall (where no name currently exists) or that the name be confirmed, based on historical documents brought to light during their investigations.

The OGN has recently received NES requests from this team querying the location and/or correct name of a waterfall or locally known

name of a waterway. The OGN has begun forwarding these enquiries to municipal councils for confirmation. It is the responsibility of the naming authority to determine the validity placed on these NES requests.

Again, by actioning the NES request, naming authorities will facilitate waterfall name updates in VICNAMES and Vicmap Hydro.

City of Warrnambool – road name histories



Phil Carter, the Asset Database Officer at Warrnambool City Council, is diligently uploading the history of 980 roads in Warrnambool.

At the time of writing, Phil was up to the letter of 'S', and has around 300 roads to go. There are, however, more than 50 roads whose naming history cannot be traced. These were often streets named in the 1800s and there is little documentation, but

the internet has been a very useful tool in tracking down road name histories.

Here are a couple of recent examples of historical submissions Phil made to VICNAMES.

- Simpson Street was named after William Simpson, Mayor of Warrnambool 1884–5, 1886 and 1890. In 1902 his business was heavily in debt. He caught the train to Melbourne and was never seen again.
- Murdoch Avenue is named after Sir Walter Murdoch who was a school teacher in Warrnambool before becoming a lecturer at Melbourne University and then Vice-Chancellor of Perth University. Perth's Murdoch University is named after him. He was also the uncle of Sir Keith Murdoch, great-uncle of Rupert Murdoch.

Warrnambool City Council maintains the city's roads register, which is a requirement of the *Road Management Act 2004*. In addition to this it has its own [online register of roads \(www.warrnambool.vic.gov.au/roads-register\)](http://www.warrnambool.vic.gov.au/roads-register).

Since the creation of the VICNAMES road history module in 2013, the number of road name origins has steadily increased. Out of the 200,000 uniquely named roads in Victoria, 956 now have histories attached.

The work Phil is undertaking is a great achievement for Phil and Warrnambool City Council, as the first municipality to have the majority of council roads histories recorded within VICNAMES. Well done Phil!

Legacy naming (long-standing names)

Many geographic features such as parks, reserves, bridges, hills and road names are named and signposted but not listed in VICNAMES, the Register of Geographic Names.

The OGN defines these geographic features and roads as being legacy and/or long-standing names, which are in local use but not officially registered. The OGN will accept requests from naming authorities to add these names to VICNAMES.

If a naming authority wishes to add such a feature or road name to VICNAMES, they need to provide the details of the feature or road such as its current name, any history and a map. They also need to raise a Change Request through the

Notification and Editing Service (NES) and forward it to OGN. The Change Request from the naming authority is its authorisation and approval for a name to officially be added to VICNAMES. Also advise in the Change Request whether the name has been gazetted in the *Victoria Government Gazette* and the date this occurred. If the name has not been gazetted, then the OGN will gazette the name upon receipt of the change request.

Examples of recent long-standing geographic names gazetted and registered by the OGN were from Mildura Rural City Council, which added to VICNAMES various Murray River waterfront features. Mildura Rural City Council submitted their requests through NES.

If the legacy name for the feature or road does not comply with the *Guidelines for Geographic Names 2010 Version 2*, the OGN will assess the name in terms of risk and advise the naming authority of its acceptance or non-acceptance. If not accepted by the OGN, the naming authority will need to follow the process under the guidelines to rename the geographic feature or road.

Data reconciliation

The OGN is also working on a data reconciliation project so that feature names in VICNAMES are reconciled with those in Vicmap and anomalies are identified, for example feature names recorded in Vicmap but not in VICNAMES.

In 2014, the OGN identified several parks and reserves recorded in Vicmap but not in VICNAMES. We wrote to councils to confirm the correct and current names of these features and their locations, and then uploaded the correct information into VICNAMES. The outcome of this exercise was consistency of locations and names in Vicmap and VICNAMES for those parks and reserves.

The OGN encourages any council or naming authority to check that their features and road names are registered in VICNAMES. If not, notify the OGN through NES to register these features. It is in the interest of naming authorities and councils to ensure these names are registered – they are then identifiable by emergency services that utilise VICNAMES and Vicmap.

The data reconciliation project is ongoing. Councils and naming authorities will be notified in the future of other feature names that are not currently in VICNAMES. Councils and naming authorities can identify features currently registered in VICNAMES by downloading all registered features within a

municipality. From the main toolbar in VICNAMES, select the icon that displays an arrow pointing south () and enter your query by selecting your municipality and 'all features'. The data is then downloaded into an excel spreadsheet.

Making decisions about naming proposals

The OGN often receives enquiries from councils and naming authorities uncertain about whether or not to pursue a naming proposal received from a member of the public. This is a decision council needs to make based on the following:

- does the naming proposal have merit?
- is it in line with council's own naming policy?
- is it compliant with the *Guidelines for Geographic Names 2010 Version 2*?

Pursuing a naming proposal for gazettal and registration in VICNAMES and Vicmap is the responsibility of the naming authority. Naming authorities are reminded to ensure their proposals meet the requirements of the *Guidelines for Geographic Names 2010 Version 2*.

The decision to pursue a naming proposal from the public is not a matter for the OGN to decide

unless a request from council for an exemption is applicable.

Exemption requests from naming authorities will only be considered by OGN for the following principles, as stated in the guidelines:

- Principle 1(H) Using commemorative names – for example, person being commemorated is living, and an exceptional circumstance applies.
- Principle 1(I) Using commercial and business names – for example, the name of a more recent business or an estate name is proposed for use as a place name. Note: estate names are considered to be commercial in nature.

The OGN does not make decisions about whether a naming proposal should be pursued for community consultation and it does not resolve a disagreement between council and a member of the public that initiated a naming proposal. We also do not resolve objections that council

receives during its community consultation process.

When a naming proposal is received OGN will audit the naming proposal to ensure it is compliant with the guidelines. If additional information is required, the OGN will request that information. If the naming proposal is not compliant with the guidelines, the OGN will decline the naming proposal and notify the council/naming authority concerned that the name will not be gazetted and registered in VICNAMES and Vicmap.

Every attempt should be made by naming authorities to ensure names comply with the guidelines. If a naming authority seeks 'in principle' support from the OGN about compliance, the naming authority must outline why they are unable to make a decision about compliance and why they seek 'in principle' support, before undertaking community consultation.

Vicmap information session

A free Vicmap information session will be held in August 2015. There will be an interesting program, great lunch and it will be a good chance to network and learn about changes in our new department (DELWP). We look forward to seeing as many local government and alpine resort representatives as possible.

Register by emailing
vicmap.help@delwp.vic.gov.au

Friday 21 August
0900–1500
Meeting Room 3
Knox City Council
511 Burwood Highway
WANTIRNA

Directions:
www.knox.vic.gov.au/Page/Page.aspx?Page_Id=32
(Melways 64/A12)

Office of Surveyor-General Victoria
Land Victoria
Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning
570 Bourke Street
Melbourne VIC 3000
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Fax: (03) 8636 2776
Email: surveyor.general@delwp.vic.gov.au
Web: www.delwp.vic.gov.au>Property and land titles>Surveying

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