

Geospatial Office

Terms of Reference

The Office assists the Geospatial Custodian to perform custodial tasks and is the engine room of the Strategy. It focuses on maintaining relationships to support the gathering, analysis, synthesis and use of intelligence to inform planning and decision making in the geospatial network.

Work programme

The Office:

- develops the policy framework that supports the Strategy and its work programme. This includes leading the formulation of technology standards, systems and protocols, and the prices and licences, which will harmonise the geospatial databases and ensure Internet accessibility
- develops budgetary processes for the Geospatial Strategy that encompass LINZ's own geospatial projects, and the geospatial projects of other agencies and across-agency projects
- develops and costs proposals for the work programme, including providing second opinions on agency-driven projects (from the perspective of the Strategy)
- assesses potential workloads, work demands and key pressure points
- manages the work programme on a day to day basis. This includes monitoring projects, identifying and assessing risks and opportunities and applying risk mitigation strategies
- provides regular quality assurance reports to the GSC
- implements specific projects, where the GSC identifies the Office as the implementing entity.

Alignment and engagement

The Office:

- scans the environment for issues or information relevant to the implementation of the strategy
- identifies technical expertise in the geospatial network, and using these experts translates technical information to the Steering Committee and relevant persons in stakeholder agencies
- develops and supports the information and evidence base that underpins the geospatial network
- communicates widely all relevant up-to-date information on geospatial matters across central and local government and industry
- hears, anticipates and assists the resolution of potential points of stress or tension
- engages widely with the local and international geospatial audience; and
- co-ordinates New Zealand's participation in international forums relevant to the Strategy

Administration

The Office:

- sets and manages the agendas for the GEG and the GSC
- leads annual planning and reporting processes for the network and for geospatial activity within LINZ
- identifies exceptions or issues needing governance attention in the Strategy and its programme and projects
- communicates governance decisions
- assesses network performance and capabilities, including any capability development required

- prepares evidence for the GSC's evaluation of the work programme; and
- achieves process efficiency e.g. through standardising requirements relating to contracting, budget and network management.

Values and Attributes

Individual Office members should:

- have a strong understanding of the rationale of the geospatial network and the hard and soft factors that contribute to its success
- concentrate their focus on the geospatial network's goals as expressed by the governance group (GEG)
- seek and win a strong mandate and support from the GSC; and
- demonstrate repeated commitment to open communications and building relationships.

Between its various members the Office members need to possess:

- strong analytical and synthesising skills
- mediating and facilitating skills
- skills in translating policy into operations and vice versa, including interpreting technical matters into simple, clear policy and budgetary terms; and
- advanced skills in managing a networked programme.

Resources

To support the Geospatial Custodian it is recommended that the Office has the following staffing resources:

Dedicated positions:

- 1 fulltime network administrator, who is a well informed and active professional member of the Office. The role requires a skilled executive officer who can connect the Office and the wider geospatial network through activities such as proactive arrangements for meetings, circulating agendas, preparing action notes and providing the steady flow of information and brokered contacts which sustain a network. This broad responsibility is focused on the network and separate from the provision of personal executive assistance associated with a senior management roles within LINZ
- 3 generic analyst positions: These positions should be viewed as generic roles and may share a common generic position description. Ideally, role holders would exhibit a range of characteristics, skills and capabilities, including policy analysis, programme management, network facilitation and communication, in different, complementary proportions. For instance, a policy capacity may be a stronger feature of one role holder, while another may exhibit stronger networking and communicating abilities. Performance management will need to reflect these differing individual capabilities.

Effective communication is an inseparable outcome of policy engagement, programme management and networking and the integration of these skills is preferred to dedicating a position to communications, which risks becoming a process oriented role without substance. Effective communication in the geospatial arena relies on substantive content and the sector is suspicious of spin.

This approach requires a communications strategy to be developed as a team resource and annually updated. The Custodian will be responsible for the collective performance of the Office's communications strategy.

It is recommended that LINZ selects these shared generic role holders as a team, where the collective covers all the bases rather than the individuals.

Important functions

- Programme management: The Office must be capable of managing the complex programme of geospatial projects. This involves coordinating all of its ingredients and working players, maintaining an overview, and driving its progress.
- Website administration: Much of the work of the geospatial network will be conducted on-line and needs sophisticated technical functionality to oil this channel. This role can be sourced from within the IT resources of LINZ but should be earmarked for the geospatial network to prevent its submergence within generic organisational tasks.

Outsourced resources

- Technical advice will be sourced from LINZ and from the geospatial network. The geospatial infrastructure requires technical resources which cannot be found in a single person but can be found within the IT resources or LINZ and the wider technical community. Short secondments or bespoke contracts are envisaged.