

Spatial Information Governance Guidelines

Part of Victoria's Spatial Information Management Framework
Second Edition

The Victorian Spatial Council was established under the Victorian Spatial Information Strategy 2004-2007 to support the advancement of Victoria's social, economic and environmental goals through the provision and application of spatial information. It does this by providing a coordinated approach to spatial information policy, development and management, and facilitating opportunities for greater partnership building, collaboration, cooperation and education.



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October 2009

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VSC CHAIRMAN'S FOREWORD

The Victorian Spatial Information Management Framework consolidates the policies, principles and guidelines for information management that were articulated by both the Victorian Geospatial Information Strategy 2000-03 and the Victorian Spatial Information Strategy 2004-07.

The Framework aims to support the effective use of spatial information to support Victoria's social, environmental and economic goals through the establishment of institutional arrangements for developing spatial information; creating and maintaining spatial information; making spatial information accessible and available; and strategic development of technology and applications.

The custodian of spatial information is at the heart of the Spatial Information Management Framework. Its policies set out the minimum requirements for custodians to manage their datasets, while a set of underlying principles provide the foundation for enabling them to maintain these datasets and ensure all Victorians are aware of and have ready access to them.

These principles address all elements of the Spatial Data Infrastructure of Victoria: *governance, custodianship, framework information, business information, quality, metadata, awareness, access, pricing and licensing, and privacy.*

The Framework is accompanied by ten Guideline documents to assist custodians in the implementation of these policies and principles. These *Governance Guidelines* provide an introduction to Victoria's approach to governance: how it is defined, who the participants are and the relationships between them.

The Guideline documents are also intended to be accessible to the general reader by setting out fully the basis on which the Framework will be delivered.

The Victorian Spatial Council is Victoria's principal coordinating body for spatial information, with a mandate to develop policy and promote best practice for spatial information management. These *Governance Guidelines* are a key contributor to the Spatial Information Management Framework's objective to make spatial information accessible and useable. It is intended that they will be informed by practical experience, and contributions to future editions are welcome from practitioners and readers alike.



Olaf Hedberg

Chair, Victorian Spatial Council

INTRODUCTION

The Spatial Information Management Framework

The Spatial Information Management Framework is Victoria's best practice approach for establishing and retaining consistency in the management of spatial information across all organisations – whether public or private – with a role or interest in doing so.

Its objective is that spatial information be made as accessible as possible.

The Victorian Spatial Council has endorsed the development of the Framework because a coordinated approach to information management will provides the greatest opportunity to:

- reduce duplication of datasets, systems and processes, and increase consolidation, leading to more efficient spending on spatial information
- optimise investment and develop partnerships across the spatial information community (public, private and academic sectors)
- deliver higher quality datasets
- improve access to spatial information

Management of spatial information by participants in the Framework should facilitate its effective use, based on four key principles: that the spatial information will:

- represent the definitive and authoritative source of the data it contains
- be managed by designated custodians
- be accessible and available to all members of the community, except where confidentiality and commercially sensitive conditions apply
- be able to be combined with other spatial information products for the purposes of analysis and decision making

The Spatial Information Management Framework provides a holistic approach to managing spatial information in Victoria, encompassing the

1. **institutional arrangements for developing spatial information;**
2. requirements for **creating and maintaining spatial information;**
3. mechanisms for **making spatial information accessible** and available; and
4. **strategic development of technology and applications.**

Together, these components of the Framework create Victoria's Spatial Data Infrastructure (SDI).

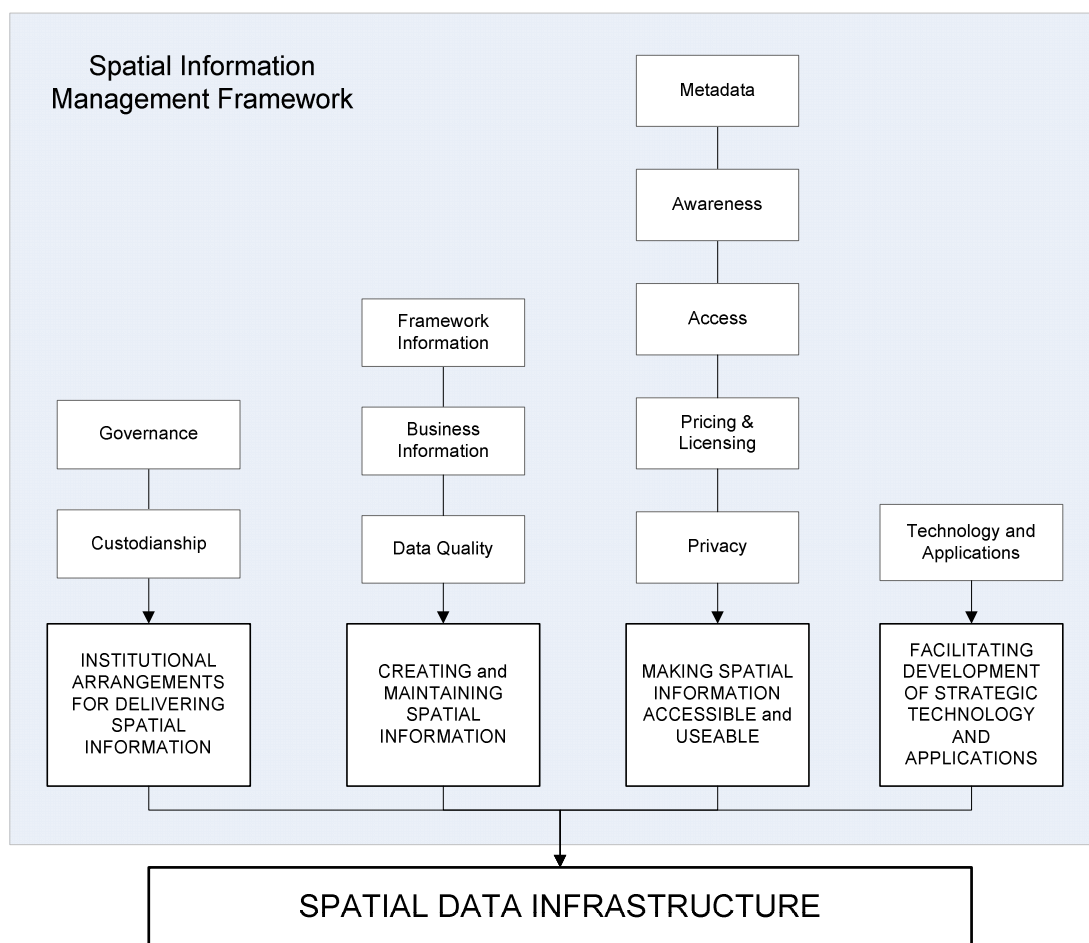
The SDI is an enabler – a mechanism for making data available and for sharing and exchanging it to enhance the achievement of social, environmental and economic goals. Behind it are the myriad of activities that create the conditions in which that sharing and exchange can take place, ie the development of the data, technology, policies, institutional arrangements and capacity building (ie equipping people to use the technology and information).

The Framework allows for the management of these elements in an integrated way to provide an environment for the effective use of spatial information.

This integrated approach is illustrated in Figure 1.

The Framework is supported by policies and guidelines that provide the formal requirements for implementing it, and tools and resources to support those responsible for that task.

Figure 1: The Victorian Spatial Information Management Framework



Separate Guidelines have been prepared for the following components of the Framework:

- Governance
- Custodianship
- Framework Information
- Business Information
- Data Quality
- Metadata
- Awareness
- Access
- Pricing and Licensing
- Privacy

The purpose of the Guidelines is to explain the policies and principles outlined in the relevant component of the Framework, and to describe activities that will support their application in implementing it.

It is envisioned that these Guidelines will vary over the life of the Framework as new information, policies, and procedures are developed, and as new issues arise.

This Document

It is intended that the Guidelines be read in conjunction with the document '*Victoria's Spatial Information Management Framework and Directory of resources*', also produced by the Victorian Spatial Council.

These Governance Guidelines have four sections.

- Part A provides an overview of the spatial information management principle of governance.
- Part B outlines the governance model that has been adopted in Victoria for spatial information.
- Part C describes the role and objectives of the Victorian Spatial Council.
- Part D describes the peak bodies that participate in the governance model and are represented on the Council.

THE GUIDELINES

PART A – BACKGROUND AND SCOPE

Background

Between 1991 and 2000, Victoria's spatial information strategies put in place a comprehensive planning framework, established the core principles for managing spatial information, and identified and developed core spatial data requirements. These principles were consolidated in the Victorian Geospatial Information Strategy 2000-03, and were implemented for framework information.¹

The Victorian Spatial Information Strategy 2004-07 retained the focus on the spatial information management principles, with the aim of extending them to all spatial data, managed by the government and the private sector.

A key feature of that Strategy was the establishment of formal institutional arrangements for coordinating the adoption of these principles and setting the strategic direction and policy/standards requirements for spatial information in Victoria.

Formal coordination arrangements were recommended by the 2002-03 *Review of the Regulatory and Administrative Framework for Survey and Spatial Information in Victoria*, which noted that

'... it is important to establish strong coordination between the three sectors and other major stakeholders [in the spatial information community]. Recent experience shows that while government plays a critical leadership role in establishing and maintaining the state spatial data infrastructure, without the support of the private and academic sectors of the industry within the institutional arrangements, the achievement of the spatial data infrastructure vision will be extremely difficult, if not impossible'.

In September 2004, the Victorian Spatial Council was established as the peak body for spatial information in Victoria to lead the implementation of spatial information strategies and policies for the State.

Spatial Information Coordination Policies

The whole basis of the Spatial Information Management Framework is 'coordination' and 'participation' – the application of consistent information management principles across a distributed network of autonomous data custodians operating throughout the whole spatial information community will rely on participation by and willing collaboration of Government, the private sector and academia for its success.

Under the coordinated information framework, participants will be required to commit to the information management and custodianship principles; develop spatial information related programs within the framework; and integrate spatial information into their business systems. The achievement of these goals will only be possible through the coordinated actions of all sectors of the spatial information community.

The high level coordination role played by the Victorian Spatial Council provides the institutional support for spatial information management and infrastructure development; the building of relationships; and the driving of policies, standards, data exchange and sharing across the whole spatial community.

These goals are expressed in the policy that has been set out in the Spatial Information Management Framework:

The VSC is responsible for policies and standards for spatial information across the spatial community.
The VSC develops and implements whole-of-community spatial information policy and standards.

1. It also formally defined this category of spatial data and consolidated it into the core datasets known as Vicmap.

Purpose of the Governance Guidelines

‘Governance’ is the way in which decisions are made and implemented.² It can be described in many ways, but essentially it incorporates the following elements:

- Managing interactions between the major actors (eg state, civil society, business, individuals, etc).
- Mechanisms by which these actors can voice their interests, resolve differences, and exercise their rights and obligations.
- Rules, institutions, practices (also ‘behaviours’) that facilitate the exercise of power/authority and participation in the functioning of society or organisation.³

While the Spatial Information Management Framework defines the coordinating mechanisms that will achieve its objective to facilitate effective use of spatial information, governance will be the means of giving effect to these mechanisms.

Therefore the purpose of these Guidelines is to set out the principles under which the Spatial Information Management Framework will be implemented using the coordinated approach and articulate the roles of the sectors participating in setting and implementing it.

2. United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, ‘What is Good Governance?’, <http://www.unescap.org/huset/gg/governance.htm>, accessed 14 February 2006

3. United Nations Development Program, *Governance Indicators: A User’s Guide*, <http://www.undp.org/governance/guidelines-toolkits.htm>, p.2, accessed 17 February 2006

PART B – VICTORIAN SPATIAL GOVERNANCE MODEL

Spatial Information Management Framework

The Spatial Information Management Framework provides the organisational framework and management principles for making spatial information accessible and useable. They underpin the management of spatial information by custodians, and the development of applications based on spatial information.

Coordination Arrangements

Achieving the objectives of the Spatial Information Management Framework and the spatial information strategies relies on the participation of the whole spatial information community.

High level coordination will provide the institutional support for spatial information management and infrastructure development; the building of relationships; and the driving of policies, standards, data exchange and sharing across the whole spatial information community.

Victorian Spatial Council

The Victorian Spatial Council is the peak body for spatial information in Victoria. Its members represent the peak spatial information associations for business, government, academia, the professions, and key interest groups.

All sectors of the spatial industry work together through the Council to lead a coordinated whole of spatial information community approach to spatial information policy development, management and utilisation, and provide a mechanism for cross-sectoral consultation and liaison.

Part C sets out in detail the objectives, structure and mode of operation of the Council.

Victoria's Spatial Governance Framework

The coordination model established by the Spatial Information Management Framework is a participatory one. All sectors of the spatial information community are to be represented through the key peak bodies to ensure all interests can be addressed.

There is an expectation that each sector will have particular roles to play within this model.

The roles of the government, private and academic sectors in implementing the strategic framework for spatial information in Victoria are set out in the Victorian Spatial Information Strategy 2008-10 (p.22), and may be summarised as:

- Government – policies, standards, management framework and principles, management and provision of fundamental data, supporting development of new products by the private sector
- Private Sector – developing value added products and services, developing markets, promoting new products, R&D, managing data according to the principles of the Spatial Information Management Framework
- Academia – education, R&D

These activities may be conducted individually or through cooperative approaches.

Principles for governance

The participatory model will be based on the following principles:

- **Participation** – all sectors of the spatial information community will be represented
- **Inclusive** – all members will have the opportunity to contribute
- **Fairness** – decisions will be enacted impartially, taking into account the needs of the spatial information community as a whole and not favouring sectoral interests
- **Consensus oriented** – all interests will be considered in the decision making processes and the decisions will reflect the best interests of the spatial information community as a whole
- **Openness** – the basis of decisions will be published and accessible; the VSC will actively communicate what it does and the decisions it makes
- **Accountability** – roles are clear; members take responsibility for what they do/the decisions made
- **Responsiveness** – needs will be considered and stakeholders served in a timely way
- **Effectiveness** – policies must deliver what is needed on the basis of clear objectives

Strategic direction and policy/standard setting model

All sectors have a role in setting Victoria's strategic direction for spatial information and implementing policies and standards for the whole spatial community and whole of Victorian Government.

Figure 1 on the following page illustrates the mechanisms that will facilitate those roles, both within the whole spatial information community and the whole of the Victorian Government. Table 1 on page 13 explains the scope of each of those roles.

The State Government's contribution to and influence on spatial information policy is described in most detail to recognise the decision making functions at the highest levels in approving the strategic direction for the whole of the Victorian Government (and hence capacity to provide a mandate to Departments and agencies).

Government is a major data creator, manager and supplier, as well as the maker of policy and setter of standards – therefore it plays a major role in implementing the Spatial Information Management Framework and ensuring the governance model works effectively.

The Government Services Group is a division of the Department of Treasury and Finance and has a significant role in helping achieve the Efficient Government policy. This policy endorses the implementation of efficiency measures through, *inter alia*, integrated ICT.

It manages a range of whole of Victorian Government ICT policies, standards and guidelines, including, for the purposes of the Spatial Information Management Framework, data interoperability.

Data Interoperability

Data Interoperability is the umbrella policy guiding standard setting for 'data interoperability between information systems'.

Data Interoperability refers to '*the ability of IT systems to be able to provide data and services to each other. This ability to provide data and services needs to be considered at the levels of business processes, information, applications and technology*'.

Standards may be developed by agencies to give effect to the aims of the policy.

The Data Interoperability Policy can be accessed via this link:

<http://www.gsgictonline.dtf.vic.gov.au/CA257310001D7FC4/pages/policies-standards-and-guidelines-data-interoperability>.

Figure 1: Strategic direction and policy/standard setting model for spatial information in Victoria

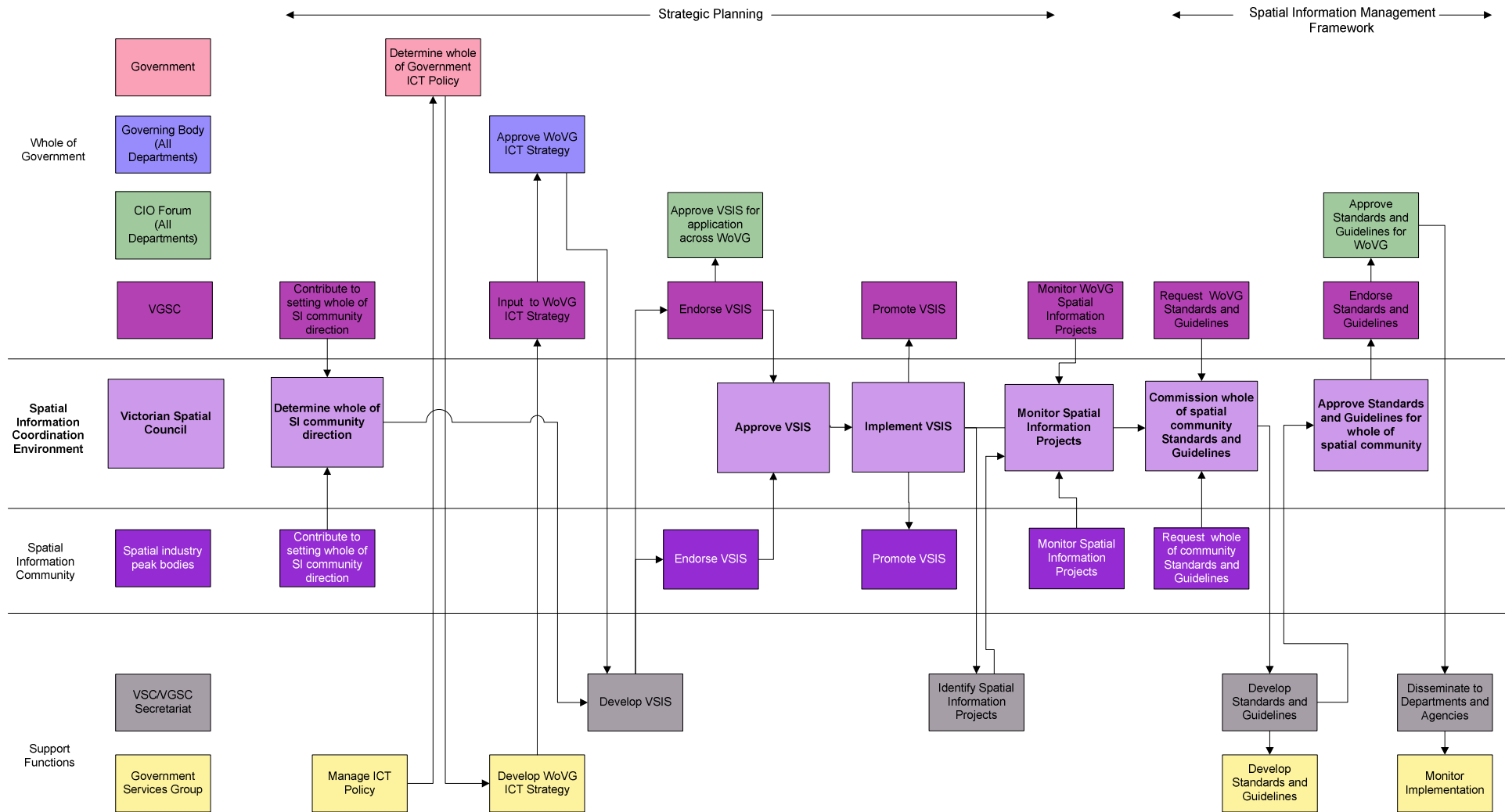


Table 1: Strategic direction and policy/standard setting roles for spatial information

Victorian Spatial Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop the overarching whole of spatial information community direction • Approve VSIS and the Spatial Information Management Framework as a whole of spatial information community Strategy and Framework, respectively • Lead the implementation of VSIS and the Spatial Information Management Framework • Monitor spatial information projects within the spatial information community sectors • Commission new State-wide spatial information standards • Approve new State-wide standards for application across the whole spatial information community
Government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Determine ICT Policy for the whole of the Victorian Government
Governing Body (All Departments)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approve the whole of Victorian Government ICT Strategy developed in response to the ICT Policy
CIO Forum (All Departments)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approve VSIS and the Spatial Information Management Framework for implementation across whole of Victorian Government • Approve spatial standards and guidelines for implementation across whole of Victorian Government <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * <i>Spatial standards approved by this Forum will be mandatory across the whole of the Victorian Government.</i>
Victorian Government Spatial Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Endorse VSIS and the Spatial Information Management Framework as a whole of Government Strategy and Framework, respectively • Promote VSIS and the Spatial Information Management Framework to Government departments and agencies • Provide a network for discussion of spatial information related issues and developments across Government • Monitor spatial information projects within departments and agencies • Identify and request new Whole of Victorian Government spatial information standards, within the Spatial Information Management Framework • Endorse new Whole of Victorian Government spatial information standards <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * <i>If the VGSC agrees to development of a new standard, this will take place through the GSG-led Whole of Victorian Government process.</i>
Other spatial information community peak bodies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Endorse VSIS and the Spatial Information Management Framework as a whole of spatial information community Strategy and Framework, respectively • Promote VSIS and the Framework to the spatial information community • Monitor spatial information projects within their sectors • Identify and request new whole of spatial information community standards • Endorse new whole of spatial information community standards
VSC/VGSC Secretariat	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop VSIS and the Spatial Information Management Framework within the whole of Victoria spatial information community objectives and whole of Victorian Government ICT Strategy • Identify those spatial information projects to be monitored by the VSC and VGSC • Develop whole of Victoria spatial information standards • Disseminate new State-wide spatial information standards to the spatial information community • Disseminate new Whole of Victorian Government spatial information standards to departments and agencies • Develop whole of Victorian Government spatial information standards in conjunction with the GSG
Government Services Group (DTF)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop the overarching Whole of Victorian Government ICT Strategy within the context of Government policy • Develop Whole of Victorian Government spatial information standards in conjunction with the VSC/VGSC Secretariat • Coordinate implementation of Whole of Victorian Government spatial information standards (if necessary)

PART C – THE VICTORIAN SPATIAL COUNCIL

The Victorian Spatial Council (VSC) has been set up to coordinate spatial information development in Victoria and lead the implementation of its spatial information strategies and policies. It does this by providing a coordinated approach to spatial information policy and management, as well as facilitating opportunities for a greater strategic focus on spatial information development, including greater partnership building, collaboration, cooperation and education.

Objectives

The VSC's objectives are to:

- Facilitate implementation of the Victorian spatial information strategies and the establishment of the spatial data infrastructure through cooperation between Victorian spatial organisations.
- Promote spatial initiatives and provide a forum for examining spatial information issues.
- Develop and assist others develop educational programs and materials through a variety of media to enhance and promote discussion of ideas regarding spatial information management and integration.
- Establish effective channels of communication across the spatial information community, including promoting interaction among Council members, federal, state and local governments, professional associations, and public and private sector groups.
- Build networks of people and technology to share spatial information and to continually improve its usefulness and accessibility, to facilitate maximum advantage of the capability to share and integrate data, and to secure the maximum return from public investments in spatial data.
- Promote the development of best practice and standards for Spatial Information Management.

Terms of Reference

It will achieve these objectives by:

- initiating and developing policy for the Victorian spatial information community
- developing strategies for financing, maintaining and developing spatial information and resources
- driving the application of spatial information and resources to achieve Triple Bottom Line (social, economic and environmental) benefits
- promoting the use of spatial information and educating the community, business and Government of the importance and value of spatial information
- developing spatial information strategies for the future

Structure and reporting relationships

The current VSC membership represents the peak spatial information associations in Victoria – the Spatial Industries Business Association (SIBA), the Surveying and Spatial Sciences Institute (SSSI), the Association of Consulting Surveyors (ASCV), the Geospatial Information and Technology Association (GITA), the Local Government Spatial Information Reference Group, the Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV), and the Victorian Government Spatial Committee (VGSC). The Australian Government is represented through the Office of Spatial Data Management, and academia is represented by the University of Melbourne. Specialist interests such as emergency services and land administration are also represented.

The Chair is independent.

Table 2: VSC membership structure

Private Sector – 2 members	Academia – 2 members
Professions – 2 members	State Government – 3 members
Local Government – 2 members	Australian Government – 1 member
Emergency Management Sector – 1 member	Catchment Management Authorities – 1 member

The VSC reports to the Secretary of the Department of Sustainability and Environment (DSE), and is supported by a Secretariat located in the Spatial Information Infrastructure (SII) Division of DSE.

Mode of operation

The VSC's preferred method of operation is facilitation, advocacy, and communication. This includes:

- being a sponsor and/or champion of major spatial information initiatives
- publishing policy statements, guidelines, discussion papers
- running forums and briefing key decision makers in business and government.

It is expected that Council members will represent their constituencies' interests and provide an opportunity for them to raise matters of concern. It is also expected that VSC members will speak on behalf of the VSC and represent its interests in their sectors.

The VSC relies on generating the support for its policy direction via the participation of members and their championing of that direction among their sectors.

For more information on the VSC, go to: <http://www.victorianspatialcouncil.org/>.

PART D – OTHER PEAK SPATIAL INFORMATION BODIES

Victorian Government Spatial Committee

The Victorian Government Spatial Committee (VGSC) has been set up to support the implementation of the Victorian spatial information strategies and policies across the whole of the Victorian government.

Its objectives are to:

- Be an advocate for building public sector capability in spatial information.
- Increase the application of spatial information in business systems and operations.
- Demonstrate how benefits can be achieved through the application of spatial information and resources.
- Provide a forum for sharing of best practices and developments in spatial technologies and their application across government agencies.

The scope of the VGSC will be the endorsement and implementation of the spatial information strategies in Government departments and agencies. Implementation incorporates the monitoring of spatial information activity within the departments and agencies, and the creation of Whole of Victorian Government spatial information standards and guidelines. The Committee also has a role in encouraging collaborative opportunities and spatial information related initiatives undertaken by departments and agencies.

The Committee's relationship with the Victorian Spatial Council is shown in Appendix 1.

All Departments are represented on the VGSC, enabling them to contribute to the development of policies and standards for spatial information that will apply to whole of Government, establish spatial information management arrangements within their respective organisations, and manage their datasets in line with the Spatial Information Management Framework. These activities may be conducted individually or through cooperative approaches, but together they contribute to the growth and development of spatial information in Departments, and to making spatial information accessible and useable.

Policy making roles of the VSC and VGSC

The VSC has adopted a collaborative approach to the development and implementation of spatial information policy and standards across the spatial information community. It relies on generating the support for its policy direction via the participation of members and their championing of that direction among their sectors.

In contrast, the VGSC may in some circumstances obtain from Government the mandate to implement spatial policy across the Victorian State Government.

It is expected that spatial policy put to the Government-wide bodies by the VGSC for endorsement as whole of State Government policy will have first been considered by the VSC and that the VSC considers the policy to be consistent with and supportive of its whole-of-Victoria policy and strategic directions.

SIBA

The Spatial Industries Business Association (SIBA), formerly known as the Australian Spatial Information Business Association, represents more than 500 companies and organisations working in the private sector in Australia and New Zealand.

Through its activities SIBA aims to:

- Ensure that core spatial data is readily accessible and available
- Raise the community's awareness about the value of the spatial industry

- Play a leading role in developing industry skills and education
- Be an active and participating supporter of the Co-operative Research Centre for Spatial Information (CRCSI) in Australia

SBIA is a national association, and has 5 regional groups including one in Victoria.

For further information, go to: <http://www.spatialbusiness.org/>

GITA

The Geospatial Information and Technology Association (GITA) is a worldwide not-for-profit organisation that provides excellence in education and information exchange on the use and benefits of spatial information and location-aware technologies for asset and infrastructure management.

For further information, go to: <http://www.gita.org.au/>

SSSI

The Surveying and Spatial Sciences Institute (SSSI) is the national body combining the professional disciplines of surveying, mapping, engineering and mining surveying, remote sensing and photogrammetry, and spatial information. It was formed in 2009 following the merger of the Institution of Surveyors Australia and the Spatial Sciences Institute.

Its vision is ‘to provide a globally recognised forum for the spatial sciences community that leads, promotes, advocates and delivers excellence’.

The principal objectives of the Institute include:

- providing quality services to members and playing a leadership role in the community
- maintaining the highest possible standards of professional ethics and practices and the integrity and status of the profession of Surveying and Spatial Science
- considering, originating, and promoting the benefit to the public in general of the art, science, technology, profession and practice of Surveying and Spatial Science
- promoting and increasing public confidence and trust in Surveying and Spatial Science
- advancing the study of Surveying and Spatial Science, fostering young professionals and providing opportunities for continuing professional development generally
- delivering professional development that facilitates exchange of ideas and increases knowledge and expertise

For further information, go to: <http://www.spatialsciences.org.au/>

Local Government Spatial Reference Group

The Local Government Spatial Reference Group was established in January 2003. The purpose of the Group has been broadly defined as being to:

- develop sector-wide positions on key spatial issues relating to local government
- take advantage of opportunities for local government collaboration
- generate increased awareness of spatial management issues across the sector
- seek resources to progress priority projects on a sector-wide basis
- advocate on behalf of local government to other key stakeholders

For further information, go to: <http://www.mav.asn.au/lgsrg>

Municipal Association of Victoria

The Municipal Association of Victoria is the peak representative and lobbying body for Victoria's 79 councils. Its role is to represent and advocate the interests of local government, raise the sector's profile, ensure its long-term security and provide policy advice, strategic advice, capacity building programs and insurance services to local government.

The MAV performs six key functions:

- **Advocacy:** representing the needs and interests of the sector with other levels of government and with other key stakeholders
- **Capacity Building:** working actively with councils to support them to improve how they operate in communities
- **Networking:** coordination, hosting and/or sponsorship of opportunities for the sector (or parts of the sector with common interests) to come together to share knowledge and experiences and plan responses
- **Policy development:** setting standards for the sector and developing the policies and the sector-wide regulations and codes needed in order to deliver service enhancement; financial and economic health; and social capital.
- **Professional Development:** human resources support and training and education programs that develop the understandings and skills of both councillors and staff
- **Awareness raising:** research and analysis leading to information dissemination and awareness raising promotions and campaigns

For further information, go to: <http://www.mav.asn.au>

Association of Consulting Surveyors Victoria

The ACSV represents the private sector of the land surveying profession and currently has over 100 member surveying firms spread across Victoria.

ACSV through its office and executive committee see its role as being to advise member firms to develop, maintain and provide an efficient service for the benefit of the community.

For further information go to: <http://www.acsv.com.au>

APPENDIX 1 - VSC AND VGSC RELATIONSHIPS AND REPORTING ARRANGEMENTS

