

# PRESENTATION TO Spatial Industry Capability Day with DIGO – 26 March 2010

*Ollie Hedberg*  
*Chair, Victorian Spatial Council*

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- Good morning ladies and gentlemen.
- It is a pleasure to welcome you all here today.
- I would like to spend my few minutes this morning to introduce the policy environment which supports the spatial industry in this State.

## *Introduction*

- Victoria has a strong spatial information community.
- One of the reasons for this is the close collaboration between the government, industry, academic and professional sectors that comprise it.
- This is most visible in the Victorian Spatial Council, of which I have had the pleasure of being Chair since its inception in late 2004.
- The Council was set up to, and I quote,
  - 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 community-wide approach to developing policy and strategy, to developing and managing spatial information, and to facilitating opportunities for partnerships and collaboration.

- Council members represent the major peak spatial information bodies active in Victoria.
- These are:
  - SIBA
  - The Surveying and Spatial Sciences Institute
  - The Association of Consulting Surveyors Victoria
  - The Municipal Association of Victoria
  - The Local Government Spatial Reference Group
  - The Geospatial Information and Technology Association, and
  - The Victorian Government Spatial Committee
  - As well as academia, the emergency services, land administration and the Australian Government
- All sectors of the spatial community, including the industry, therefore have a say in how the community develops and helps shape its strategic direction in Victoria.

*Victorian Spatial Information Strategies*

- This direction is set out in the three-yearly Victorian Spatial Information Strategies.

- These Strategies provide a framework for
  - addressing the requirements for managing spatial information and making it available,
  - for collaboration and partnerships, and
  - for being responsive to the changing technological environment in which we are all operating.
- This year, 2010, is the final year of the current Strategy.
- Its focus has been on the importance of the whole spatial information community working together, or being ‘engaged’, to achieve a ‘spatially enabled Victoria’.
- That is, *applying spatial information to the delivery of services or the development of solutions to problems.*
- Through this engagement, we all work together to
  - develop new products or services,
  - devise solutions to problems, and
  - create modern and relevant policies and legal and regulatory frameworks
- In the current strategy we are using this engagement to respond to the challenges of:
  - Keeping pace with rapid change

- Encouraging the release of data to support creativity and innovation
  - Encouraging partnerships
  - Managing spatial information so that it can be used and exchanged
  - Finding new ways to broaden the spatial information skills base, and
  - Maintaining a governance model based on participation and collaboration
- One of the strengths of Victoria's approach to engagement is the clear definition of the roles of all the sectors.
  - In broad terms, we have defined these as follows.
  - Government's role is to establish policies and standards, manage and provide fundamental data, and support development of new products by the private sector.
  - The private sector's is to develop value added products and services, and markets for them, undertake R&D, and manage its own data according to the community-wide standards.
  - And academia provides education and undertakes R&D.
  - The Council itself plays the role of communicator, advocate, educator, facilitator, and supporter or sponsor of initiatives that show off the potential for spatial enablement.

*Developing the spatial information community through collaboration and partnerships*

- The certainty created by defining these roles provides opportunities for collaboration between and within the sectors.
- Of the 4 strategic directions set out in the current Strategy, one deals specifically with the private sector.
- The Council is challenging the spatial information community to develop through greater collaboration and partnerships to capitalise on the strengths of the individual members and to share expertise.
- The community is at a critical point in its development, as evidenced by
  - the entry of large corporations into the market and their growing dominance
  - the trend towards acquisition of specialist spatial information providers and developers by these corporations
  - the challenge to attract and retain skilled employees, and
  - the rapid expansion of technology requiring ever larger investments
- Taken together, the developments represent a major test for the Victorian spatial industry.
- In response, the Strategy challenges the members to
  - Enter into alliances and joint ventures outside the traditional spatial industry to bring in new skills and opportunities, and to
  - Create clusters and networks within the industry to provide capacity, build on individual strengths, and share technologies.

- There is a body of evidence that demonstrates that collaborative partnerships have a positive impact.
- More formal types of collaboration such as clusters can stimulate innovation, exports, investment, high-quality jobs and new business opportunities.
- Collaboration can also provide opportunities for widening the pool of resources that can be applied to new developments.
- The Council also challenges Government to support the industry by providing access to its spatial data and making a clear statement about the distribution of Intellectual Property to facilitate commercialisation of new products and services.

### *Concluding remarks*

- To conclude, the Victorian Spatial Council believes spatial information is a critical enabling infrastructure.
- It has significant potential to build society's capacity to deal with the many challenges it is facing.
- I welcome SIBA Victoria's initiative in organising this Capability Day to demonstrate the Victorian spatial industry's services, capabilities, skills and products.
- I am pleased to have had the opportunity to outline how our whole community is working together to provide an environment for collaboration that encourages their development.

- I know that today you will hear many examples of just such initiatives.
- I also have the pleasure of being involved on a range of boards and committees around Australia and am able to say that Victoria is well ahead in its governance approach and is setting the pace with innovative ways of managing and using spatial information.
- I'm therefore sure that new partnerships between Victoria's spatial industry and defence and emergency management will emerge.
- Please enjoy the day and the networking opportunities it will provide, and I look forward to meeting as many of you as I can.
- Thank you.