

REPORT OF GEOGRAPHICAL NAMES BOARD

Preserving the history,
culture and identity of
New South Wales



In 1966 the New South Wales Government constituted the Geographical Names Board (the Board) and conferred on it certain powers with respect to the naming of places. The Board is empowered by the *Geographical Names Act 1966* which enables it to:

- assign names to places
- approve that a recorded name of a place shall be its geographical name
- alter a recorded name or a geographical name
- determine whether the use of a recorded name or a geographical name shall be discontinued
- adopt rules of orthography, nomenclature and pronunciation with respect to geographical names
- investigate and determine
 - the form, spelling, meaning, pronunciation, origin and history of any geographical name
 - the application of any geographical name with regard to position, extent or otherwise
- compile and maintain a vocabulary of Aboriginal words used or suitable for use in geographical names and to record their meaning and tribal origin
- compile and maintain a dictionary of geographical names with a record of their form, spelling, meaning, pronunciation, origin and history
- publish a gazetteer of geographical names
- inquire into and make recommendations on any matters relating to the names of places referred to it by the Minister

- compile, maintain and publish a list of road names.

The Board proactively seeks to abide by these statutory provisions through the adoption of nomenclature policies and procedures which are both nationally and internationally recognised.

Interesting and unusual place names

The Board was encouraged to see that the origin of the names formalised this year show strong trends towards recognising Aboriginal language, cultural diversity and commemoration. Equally encouraging, however, were proposals considered by the Board to be both creative and unique in their own right.

This uniqueness was demonstrated when residents in Fennell Bay proposed the name 'Trickle Under Creek' for a water course which was piped under an urban subdivision. Similarly, 'Tin Hare Creek' and 'Coffee Pot Creek' owe their creative origin to the railway that traversed them. Both creek names were colloquial terms for locomotives that used the line.

Another creative proposal was that of Bob-a-Day Park. This name commemorates the significant contribution made by labourers who were responsible for landscaping the original Prince Henry Hospital site. These men were given labouring work in return for board, lodging and one 'bob' (one shilling) a day.

Recognising Aboriginal culture

The Board has been committed to the preservation and promotion of Aboriginal languages since its inception in 1966. This commitment is demonstrated in the names assigned in the reporting period. Over ten percent of these names have established Aboriginal origins, whilst many others were known to be derived from Aboriginal languages.

The Board has continued to recognise important traditional Aboriginal placenames alongside longstanding introduced names. In January 2006 the Board officially dual named Mount Warning. This mountain remains significant to Aboriginal people, providing a mythology that extends back to the dreamtime. The traditional Aboriginal name Wollumbin now sits side by side with the name Mount Warning for this prominent peak.

To ensure the ongoing support of Aboriginal communities, the Board has continued with its targeted training initiatives. In December 2005 Indigenous language workers representing the Dharug, Gamilaraay, Gumbaynggir, Ngiyampaa, Wiradjuri and Yugambah Aboriginal Nation groups met at Tranby Aboriginal College in Sydney to learn more about how to research traditional placenames. This course was arranged as a follow-up to the series of twelve workshops held in regional centres of the state between June 2004 and May 2005.

On 2 May 2006 the Board met with Byron Shire Council to discuss issues pertaining to the recognition of Aboriginal culture through placenaming. As a result of this meeting the Board has agreed to host a workshop in the Shire which aims to educate the community in researching historical written source material on Aboriginal placenames

and language, reconstruction of pronunciation and spelling of traditional Aboriginal placenames, the recognition of significant Aboriginal placenames in the mainstream community and the promotion of government policies in relation to reconciliation.

Acknowledging excellence in the community

The Board seeks to recognise outstanding achievement in the community by commemoratively naming relevant geographical features. Acts of bravery, community service and exceptional accomplishment by both individuals and groups are grounds for this recognition.

Honours of this nature have been bestowed on over forty individuals and groups during the reporting year. Returned service men and women, famous sporting identities, educators, industry leaders, former elected civic officials, famous Aboriginee, community leaders and everyday Australians have all been commemorated in this fashion.

Legal addresses in NSW

Both the Board and the Department of Lands are committed to Disaster Recovery and Emergency Services. Authoritative addressing is seen as a major benchmark in this commitment as it provides a navigable reference to all properties within NSW. For the address to be seen as authoritative both the road and address locality names have to be official.

In the reporting year the Board has formally assigned over 280 address locality names and concurred with 1099 new road names.

In an endeavour to ensure this information is relayed to all relevant emergency services, the Board has also made a commitment to re-engineering

its information systems. It has embarked on a project to upgrade and expand the Geographical Names Register of NSW (the GNR) and other associated databases. The Spatial Enablement of Road and Place Names (SERPN) project seeks to remodel these applications so as to allow integration with key departmental spatial datasets and other external gazetteers. SERPN also aims to expand the current GNR so as to record authoritative information for road names in NSW.

Goals for the Geographical Names Board

- To continue to preference Aboriginal placenames in a manner which seeks to recognise and publicise these names and in so doing promote the use of traditional Aboriginal languages within New South Wales
- To develop and implement initiatives that enforce authoritative addresses thus ensuring a robust system for the delivery of emergency services to the community
- To finalise address locality boundaries for all areas within NSW by 2007
- To continue to recognise the contribution to the community by everyday Australians through commemoratively naming geographical features within the state
- To continue the redevelopment of the Board's information systems so as to ensure maximum efficiencies
- To accomplish over four hundred placename determinations in the reporting year
- To ensure high standards for the naming of the roads, schools and National Parks in NSW through a continued commitment to a

concurrency role for toponyms that fall outside the Board's jurisdiction

- To encourage the standardisation and promotion of geographical names on a state, national and international basis.

Members and attendance at meetings

The Surveyor General of NSW chairs the Board which consists of members representing the Royal Australian Historical Society, the Local Government and Shires Association, the State Library of NSW, the Community Relations Commission, the Geographical Society of NSW, the NSW Aboriginal Land Council and the Department of Planning.

Per the provision of the *Geographical Names Act 1966* the Board may appoint Counsellors to advise it on matters within its powers and functions. The Board has appointed four Counsellors to advise it on issues regarding addressing, history and linguistics.

The Board met formally on five occasions during the year. Five members form a quorum. The person presiding at the meeting has a deliberative vote and casting vote. The list over the page shows the number of meetings attended by each Board Member and Counsellor.

Members of Board	Position	Attendance
Warwick Watkins AMP:ISMP (Harv), MNatRes, DipScAgr, HAD (Hons), JP, FAPI, FISA	Surveyor General	5
Paul Harcombe B Surv (UNSW), M Geom	Chief Surveyor	5
Cheryl Evans	Nominee of the State Librarian	4
Paul Hartley*	Nominee of the Director General, Department of Planning	3
Peter Woods Emeritus May, OAM, CMC, JP, BA, MLitt, TTC, Cert. Comm. Med, MACE, FAICD	Nominee of the Local Government and Shires Associations	4
Alan Ventress BA DIPLIB	Nominee of the governing body of the Royal Australian Historical Society	5
Jack Devery BSc, MTCP	Nominee of the governing body of the Geographical Society of New South Wales	5
Murray Chapman	Nominee of the NSW Aboriginal Land Council	3
Stepan Kerkyasharian AM	Nominee of the Community Relations Commission	3
Counsellors		Attendance
Dr Peter Orlovich PhD, MA, MLib, DipEd		5
Dr Jakelin Tory		2
Terry Pendleton		4
Gerard Herbert		4

*It is noted that Mr Paul Hartley resigned from the Board on 24 April 2006 due to structural changes in the former Department of Infrastructure, Planning and Natural Resources. The Board has initiated the process to fill this position.

The right advice

To ensure the Board's decisions are based on sound academic research, the Board has constituted a Technical and Scientific sub-committee (the committee).

This committee is tasked with investigating issues pertaining to linguistic consistency for various names relating to traditional Aboriginal languages, the investigation and development of reports relating to nomenclature issue and ongoing training and research programs for the Board.

The committee consists of experts in the areas of archival research, linguistics, history and toponymy and is also constituted as the State Executive Committee of the Australian National Placename Survey.

Publications

The Board publishes various documents which are designed to inform the community on issues concerning placenames within NSW. The following publications are available through the Board's website or at the Board's office:

- The Recognition of Aboriginal Placenames in NSW
- Geographical Names Board – Preserving the history, culture and identity of New South Wales
- Determining Suburbs and Localities in NSW
- Dual Naming – Supporting cultural recognition
- Road Naming in NSW
- Commemorative Naming
- Glossary of Status Values in the Geographical Names Register
- Guidelines for the Determination of Placenames
- Naming Proposal Package
- Determination of Locality/Suburb Names and Boundaries
- Introduction of New Suburb Names
- Suburb and Locality Boundaries
- Proposed Geographical Name Commemorating a Person
- Guidelines for the Naming of Roads

Facts and figures

Naming and boundary determinations by category completed during the reporting year:

Designation	2002/03	2003/04	2004/05	2005/06
Airfield	0	22	0	0
Airport	0	0	0	1
Amphitheatre	0	0	1	0
Anabranch	0	0	0	0
Bay	0	0	12	0
Beach	2	5	6	12
Bluff	0	0	0	0
Boundary	0	0	1	0
Breakwater	0	2	1	0
Canyon	0	1	0	0
Cave	0	0	0	0
Cove	0	0	8	0
Butte	1	0	0	0
Cemetery	0	3	0	0
Channel	1	4	0	0
Chasm	0	1	0	0
Clearing	0	0	0	0
College	0	1	0	0
County	0	0	0	0
Cove	0	2	0	0
Creek	10	4	5	5
Crossing	0	0	1	1
Dam	0	2	0	0
Dock	0	0	0	0
Falls	2	1	0	0
Flat	0	2	0	0
Ford	0	1	0	0
Forest	0	1	0	2
Gap	0	1	0	0
Glen	0	0	1	0
Gradient	0	1	1	1
Gully	6	1	0	16
Head	0	2	0	0
Headland	0	1	5	0
Hill	1	2	2	0
Historic Area	29	0	1	0
Historic Locality	1	2	24	0
Historic Site	29	1	1	0
Inlet	1	0	0	0
Islet	0	0	1	0
Island	0	1	4	0
Lagoon	0	0	0	1
Lake	1	1	0	2
Locality	268	84	138	160

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Designation	2002/03	2003/04	2004/05	2005/06
Lookout	2	1	2	0
Mountain	2	1	2	3
Parish	0	0	1	0
Pass	0	1	1	0
Peak	10	0	0	0
Peninsula	0	0	0	0
Point	1	2	17	1
Port	0	0	1	0
Post Office	0	1	0	1
Railway Station	0	2	0	0
Ramp	1	0	0	0
Range	0	1	1	0
Reach	0	0	1	0
Region	0	2	0	1
Reef	1	0	0	0
Reserve	176	224	41	46
Reservoir	0	0	0	1
Ridge	1	0	2	0
River	0	1	0	0
River Bend	1	0	0	0
Rock	1	0	1	0
Rural Place	89	2	1	3
Saddle	0	0	0	0
Sandbar	0	0	1	0
School	1	20	9	7
Spring	0	0	1	0
State	0	0	0	0
Stream	0	0	0	0
Suburb	25	46	44	128
Swamp	1	1	1	0
Town	9	0	0	0
Track	1	1	1	1
Trig. Station	122	38	0	0
Urban Locality	0	0	0	0
Urban Place	8	4	9	10
Valley	0	0	0	0
Village	47	10	0	1
Walking Track	0	0	0	0
Waterfall	1	1	2	0
Water Feature	0	0	0	0
Waterhole	0	6	0	0
Weir	0	0	0	0
Wharf	1	19	0	0
Total	853	533	352	404
Dual Names Assigned	2	0	22	1