

Electronic Survey Plans a Reality in 2006



After more than 150 years of hard-copy survey plan submissions to registries in BC, a significant milestone was realized in 2006.

The submission of electronic survey plans became reality on July 24 with amendments to the *Land Act*, *Land Title Act*, *Land Survey Act*, and *Land Surveyors Act*.

The amendments allow legal survey plans to be submitted through the Electronic Filing System of the Land Title and Survey Authority of BC. This business improvement is in keeping with the Authority's goal of enhancing client services through electronic technology.

The first release of the Digital Survey Plan system allows for the submission of an electronic survey plan (in PDF format), together with associated signatory documents of surveys prepared pursuant to the *Land Act*, *Petroleum and Natural Gas Act*, *Mineral Tenure Act*, and the *Coal Act*.

We are pleased to see the land surveying community is using this new technology. From the "red hot" oil and gas sector, we have received a significant number of well site plans in electronic format.

Early in 2007, we expect to be in a full production pilot for electronic plans prepared under the *Land Title Act*.

There are several key benefits to the use of electronic survey plans.

- Plans no longer need to be drafted onto a mylar sheet.
- The plan does not need to be physically sent to all the owners and consenting signatories for signatures. Consenting signatories to survey plans will not sign the face of the mylar plan as in the past, but will sign a separate document.

This allows signatures to be acquired concurrently, rather than one after another. Instead of shipping a survey plan around the country or the world, an electronic plan, fully protected by a digital signature, can be sent to several locations at the same time for review and signoff.

- The traditional registration set of plans does not have to be physically delivered for deposit at the registries. Once all consents have been assembled, an electronic plan application and the electronic plan may be submitted through EFS.

The provisions applicable to electronic plan applications and electronic plans can be found under Division 2.1 of Part 10.1 of the *Land Title Act*.

From the Authority's perspective, it is more efficient for our staff to review and confirm plans submitted

electronically, then automatically push them through the system to our electronic data base for customer retrieval. Unlike hard-copy plans, electronic plans need not be scanned into the image data base.

The automated flow of electronic plans will result in a better image available for customer retrieval purposes.

While submission of electronic survey plans is completely voluntary, we expect the cost- and time-saving benefits will help drive usage of the new technology.

So far, that seems to be the case. The Authority has successfully used its electronic filing system for submission of land title documents and, as such, has paved the way for smooth integration of electronic survey plans. The combination of electronic documents and survey plans provides the foundation for further electronic service enhancements by the Authority.

The Land Title and Survey Authority of BC is a not-for-profit, nonshare capital corporation responsible for managing, operating, and maintaining British Columbia's land title and land survey systems. ▲

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