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The Changing Role of the Surveying/ Spatial Industries Professional – Looking towards 2040

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Our session today -

- Look at the current FIG definition of a surveyor
- Hear about our workshop held last year to gather views and inspire discussion to update the FIG definition.
- Consider the topics we discussed and the findings about the definition and around each of the topic areas.
- Hear the findings of discussions held at the Young Surveyor's Conference on Wednesday 18 June.
- Join the discussion at this session.

FIG Definition of a Surveying/Spatial Professional

- A surveyor is a professional person with the academic qualifications and technical expertise to conduct one, or more, of the following activities;
 - to determine, measure and represent land, three-dimensional objects, point-fields and trajectories;
 - to assemble and interpret land and geographically related information,
 - to use that information for the planning and efficient administration of the land, the sea and any structures thereon; and,
 - to conduct research into the above practices and to develop

Workshop Outcome

- Facilitated workshop in Melbourne September 11, 2013
- 20 local and 3 Skype participants
- Aim to “...gather views and inspire constructive discussion from a wide cross-section of interested parties... to update the FIG definition ... to define the long term future role for surveyors and spatial professionals.
- Existing definition has a wide definition of surveyor to include all professional fields.
- The outcome of the workshop has been a set of findings to stimulate analysis and debate at the FIG Congress in Kuala Lumpur.
- This will be combined in a paper recommending changes to the definition to be submitted to the FIG Council at the end of 2014.

Workshop Format

- Scene setting presentations
- Group work on five topics with three rotations:
 - New technology/ future scan
 - Young professionals view, new ways of working, fitting into the spatial industry
 - The future of surveying as a regulated profession
 - Education and professional development
 - Under-represented groups, remote areas, indigenous groups
- History break – Looking back to look forward
- Plenary discussion on group topics
- Next actions

About the Definition

- The current wording no longer works well:
 - The wording is not 'modern'
 - Most content is right but it misses some vital elements
- The definition has a curious role:
 - It is primarily inward looking
 - Some considered that only limited use is made of it
- But:
 - It defines who we are and how we see ourselves
 - It informs many other documents and narratives about us
 - It creates a framework within which we can work together
 - It puts a boundary around our expertise
 - It formalises and adds credibility to our expertise so our value is recognised

Overarching Findings

- Our definition needs to focus on function (outputs we deliver for the end user) rather than our skills (inputs)
- The role of the surveyor has changed significantly since the previous definition, as much in emphasis as activity
- International diversity makes it difficult for it to work for everyone and to capture local issues and peculiarities

Topic Findings 1

- Technology
 - Technology is a massive and obvious driver of change
 - But surveyors select technology, rather than being driven by it
 - Surveyors may need to be data curators not creators
 - The skill of the surveyor will be needed to identify authoritative data in a crowd sourced or machine sourced data world
 - Surveyors may no longer 'own' the data
 - Surveyors must be technology experts

Topic Findings 2

- A regulated profession
 - The regulated element is small but vital to the definition
 - Regulation and licensing creates confidence in the advice
 - Global differences mean the definition must be carefully framed
 - Reliability of interpretation (new model) is at least critical as accuracy (old model)

Topic Findings 3

- Education
 - The description affects enrolment
 - Career decisions are made very young
 - There are many influencers including parents, teachers and institutions
 - Specific words create lasting impressions
 - Other terms complement the word 'surveyor':
 - Specific words (e.g. Geomatics)
 - General words (e.g. Spatial)

Topic Findings for 4 and 5

- Young professionals
 - The language must be work for young people
 - The definition must demonstrate the breadth of our scope
- Under-represented groups
 - We are not alone in having an interest in the land so we must focus on outcomes
 - Under-representation varies between countries and cultures so our definition must be general
 - Our definition must aim at 100% of people and use 'inclusive' words

Exploring the Topics with the Young Surveyors on Wednesday 18 June 2014

- A session was held with the Young Surveyors Conference Chaired by Tom Champion from Victoria who had been at the 2013 workshop with Benedicta Ugwulebo from Nigeria as Rapporteur.
- Tom outlined the findings from the earlier workshop and the ran a condensed version of this for the session with the young surveyors and a couple of young surveyors at heart.
- There was a very spirited discussion and all aspects of the topics were reviewed. This led to a range of additional points to feed into the process.

Key points made by the Young Surveyors – 1

- Technology
 - The focus of technology is the end product , not the technology which is an enabling tool and always changing.
 - The use and cost for online data is an emerging issue
- A regulated profession
 - Regulations vary between jurisdictions and this needs to be considered
 - Regulation protects the interests of the public
 - Self regulation as a professional is important as well as government or professional regulations.
- Education
 - Needs to accommodate difference across the jurisdictions.
 - Being a member of a professional organisation is important for ongoing growth and development
 - Ongoing self development is needed as a professional and also assisting the profession to develop

Key points made by the Young Surveyors - 2

- Young professionals
 - Involvement of young professionals in considering key policies like definitions is needed as they will be the future leaders
 - There is an increasing awareness by this group that their professional work has important social, ethical and environmental impacts
- Under-represented groups
 - Surveying terms are not accessible to a broad range of people in society this limits participation to groups 'in the know'
 - Need to increase involvement of different groups including women, underrepresented ethnic and social economic groups and different religious – this will allow our profession to better serve a diverse society

So Where's the New Definition ?

- The workshop was about:
 - Validating the need
 - Defining the scope
 - Setting out major elements which must be covered
 - Enlisting champions and experts
- We think it is worth:
 - Getting endorsement and ownership
 - Getting more people to discuss this like the Young Surveyors on Wednesday 18 June
 - Getting it right

Framework to develop Discussion Paper

- Champions from the workshop will prepare:
 - Summary of requirements for definition in regards to their topic
 - Tentative ideas or examples of how current definition may change
- Collaborative Commission 1 activity will develop an integrated discussion paper
- We will present a discussion paper to FIG
- FIG Commission 1 will then progress towards a formal change of definition
- We may also consider the development of a policy paper to take this further

Join the Debate - Contact me:

- send your ideas or discussion points to me
or Robyn McCutcheon, Vice Chair Commission 1

-join FIG and Commission 1 discussions on LinkedIn

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