

The Ontario Land
SURVEYOR
 Incorporating Blaze

Volume 1 Number 5

Report of Special Committee on Reference Plans

In accordance with instructions received from Mr. Harold Howden and the Council of the Association of Ontario Land Surveyors, a committee was formed comprising Mr. Craig Stewart, Mr. Bruce Wright, Mr. Bruce Donaldson, and Mr. John Dodd, Chairman, to investigate the alleged charges that reference plans under the Registry Act are causing serious and costly time delays in service, and that the report should include a questionnaire to all firms in private practice, and further that the report should include recommendations.

The committee met and prepared a questionnaire, a copy of which is on file at the Association of Ontario Land Surveyors office in Toronto, which was subsequently forwarded to all land surveyors in private practice in the Province of Ontario, and this report is a result of the replies to said questionnaire.

The questionnaire was circulated to some 240 private practitioners and a response was received slightly in excess of fifty per cent of those questionnaires that were mailed out.

Those persons replying to the questionnaire indicated in approximately two-thirds of the replies received that reference plans did in fact increase time to complete a survey, while approximately twenty-five per cent of the respondents stated that there was no increase in time, while the balance made no comment. The average increase in time appears to be approximately two weeks including the time required for plan examination.

The Land Surveyors responding also indicated that it takes in the range of from two to four weeks to complete a plan of survey from the initial time of contact to the date of reporting same to the client. One surveyor responded that it took as much as twenty-six weeks to complete a survey requiring a reference plan.

Delays in completing a survey were relegated to the following areas. The

first and most obvious problem appears to be the fact that the Abstract Indexing system in the Registry Offices is just not capable of handling the increased volume of work that is going through the system in the past few years.

A second reason for delay appears to be the regulations under the Registry Act.

The next most common problem relating to delays appears to be the monumentation regulations under the Survey Act.

Other reasons for delay were such items as the mandatory requirement for astronomic bearings when same were not readily available at the time of the survey. The requirement for checking all reference plans prior to deposit appears in some areas to be creating considerable delay. It has also become apparent that there is a lack of competent survey staff in many areas of the Province, and that many of the surveyors are working under a larger work load than in the past.

It has been noted in most instances Land Registrars are using discretion in accepting metes and bounds descriptions and are also accepting an undertaking in regard to Bulletin No. 73022 entitled "Reference Plans, guidelines for the exercise of discretion"

Recommendations for the Improvement of Service Registry Offices

Various complaints were forthcoming about the existing Land Registry Office system being responsible for many of the delays.

The complaints covered: (a) The present abstracting system is not conducive to large-volume usage as occurs today. The abstract books should be broken down by concession, or preferably by individual lot to permit wider usage, particularly in those offices that are extremely busy. (b) The facilities of those offices receiving abnormally in-

creased usage due to recent changes in the Statutes should be enlarged to adequately meet the public need. (c) The checking of reference plans by Land Registrars who have not been adequately trained in the function should be restricted to spot checks only. (d) The checking system should be standardized to eliminate personal bias, and local idiosyncrasies and should not question survey evidence or survey procedure, particularly in light of the fact that many registrars are not competent to discuss these items. (e) The necessity for relating land ties to lot corners should in certain of the older parts of the province be treated with local discretion.

Regulations

These should be standardized to provide uniformity in all legislation covering land transfer, particularly under the Land Titles Act, Registry Act, Condominium Act, Certification of Titles Act and the Boundaries Act.

Land Surveyors

Land Surveyors should be encouraged to expand their operations in order to accommodate the increased work load. Land Surveyors should be encouraged to adopt all methods of modern technology at their disposal such as electronic distance measuring equipment and electronic computers. Land Surveyors should also be encouraged to make use of pre-printed plan forms, use of drafting and calculator service and the use of commercial title searchers where same are available.

There should be one set of regulations covering standards of surveys and plans required by the Registry Act, Land Titles Act, Condominium Act, Boundaries Act, and Certification of Titles Act. The Association of Ontario Land Surveyors should be prepared to offer assistance to the Ministry of Consumer and Commercial Relations in developing a revised standard set of regulations.

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Upcoming Surveying Meetings

Association of Ontario Land Surveyors
February 3 - 5, 1975, Sudbury

Regional Groups

South Central — October 8, 1974 (tentative)

Hamilton & District — September 23, 1974

North Eastern — October 19, 1974

Kawartha-Haliburton — October 6, 1974

Eastern — October 26, 1974 (tentative)

Other Associations

Corporation of Land Surveyors of the Province of B.C.
January 1975, Victoria, B.C.

New Brunswick Land Surveyors
January 21 and 22, 1975, Saint John, N.B.

The Association of Nova Scotia Land Surveyors
November 7-9, 1974, Amherst, N.S.

Conferences and Conventions

Modern Cadastre
October 23 and 24, 1974, Ottawa

American Congress of Surveying & Mapping
— American Society of Photogrammetry
September 10-13, 1974, Washington, D.C.

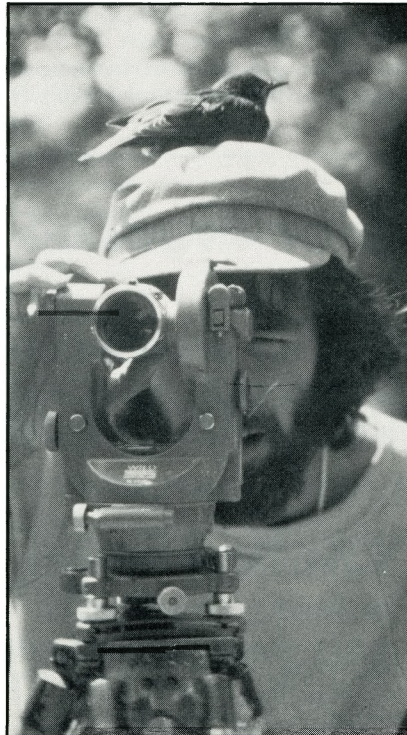
XIV International Congress of Surveyors
September 7-16, 1974, Washington, D.C.

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It is the recommendation of this committee that this report be published in the next issue of THE ONTARIO LAND SURVEYOR and that the contents of this report form a theme for information and discussion at the next annual meeting of the Association of Ontario Land Surveyors.

It is a further recommendation of this committee that the professional standards committee of the Association of Ontario Land Surveyors become responsible for keeping the membership as a whole informed on an ongoing basis of improvements that could be made in business practices, surveying techniques and other related matters.

It is a further recommendation of this committee that the Public Relations Committee of the Association of Ontario Land Surveyors be charged with the responsibility of preparing a series of articles for publication in the Journal of the Law Society of Upper Canada or other related journals for dissemination to the legal profession of the Province of Ontario. This series of articles could relate to the problems and other items of mutual interest to the respective professional associations.



Oops! Up goes the overhead as starling perches on transit man Paul Nesbitt on a recent London survey. (Photo by Party Chief Blair Harrison).



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