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PRESIDENT'S REPORT FOR THE 2020 - 2021 YEAR

It is my pleasure to present this 20th annual President's report.

Unfortunately, our AGM this year must be a virtual one with the ongoing outfall from Covid-19 having shelved our Dunedin workshop prospects.

It is perhaps though, worth reflecting and congratulating ourselves on achieving this 20 year milestone with the fact that the Institute remains strong and at the forefront of advocating for cadastral surveyors and the public. This has been achieved by focused input into a number of significant advocacy areas over time including surveyor certification, post-earthquake Christchurch cadastre, survey rules and fees; as well as advocating on many other issues which affect our members and clients. Our expertise is now well recognised beyond the organisation.

Our membership at around 50 remains similar to last year. Again, I would encourage you to continue to invite your friends and colleagues to consider membership. There are many benefits in the current climate of a small agile organisation with a voluntary structure.

At our last AGM, it was recommended that the committee explore raising subscriptions so that we could employ assistance for the work we do, or pay for members expert time. We have made the decision to not recommend this at this time, as we feel having relatively cheap membership fees is a large point of difference and a good value for money proposition.

Our finances are in very good shape (with over \$50k in the bank) and do not currently restrict our ability to support any project. A website refresh has had some preliminary investigation and would likely be a worthy long-term investment. However, that does not prevent funding of other projects along with continued business-as-usual activities. This year for the first time we sponsored a member (Louis Scott) to the S+SNZ conference, in Auckland.

One of our key priorities over recent years has been replacement of the 2010 Rules for Cadastral Survey. That has come to fruition this year with implementation of the Cadastral Survey Rules 2021 at the end of August. As an organisation, we can feel proud of our input in both prompting a better replacement and reviewing their content and context.

We have recently expressed a view to the Surveyor-General that the accuracy standards in Rules 19 and 21 may, on occasion, be difficult to achieve for Class A surveys. We have similarly commented on the abandonment of the "Alternate" *Limited Titles* process (which allowed adoption of some boundaries in particular circumstances). We understand that the dispensation process will be able to be used instead.

Definition of *Limited Titles* continue to be contentious and navigating them through the approval process difficult. It is my view that we should be doing everything possible to eliminate “slivers” in the cadastre, and if the current law or interpretation does not support that, then it needs changing. This has been mentioned at several of our Toitu Te Whenua – LINZ relationship meetings.

Our relationship meeting this year took place in Wellington on 25 May. We spent some time discussing long processing times, call centre and offsite record retrieval wait times, the STEP programme and the Rules rollout. The meeting followed our first meeting with a Minister of Land Information, Damien O'Connor regarding concerns over survey and title fees.

We have spent considerable time this year in advocating for a more equitable distribution of LINZ costs amongst survey and title customers, and others. Unfortunately, those concerns have been largely ignored and we are set for a 1.5x cost increase in early 2022 for lodgement fees. As well as a full and comprehensive submission and meeting the Minister, we have also had a zoom call with opposition spokesperson for Land Information, Louise Upston. One small concession is the removal of the resubmission/requisition fee.

As noted above, we have had serious concerns about delays in plan processing timeframes and other delays. It has now been over 18 months and the first covid lockdown, and at a time of considerable land development, that these extended delays have been tolerated. We met with senior LINZ officials via zoom on 6 August, who outlined the steps they are taking to reduce these times. At the time of writing, these steps have not been successful and the incoming committee will need to pursue an appropriate remedy with LINZ.

Following the finalising of our “Good Survey Practice” high level document, Brent George has formatted a draft lower-level practice guideline which has been distributed to a small working group and S+SNZ. This will be a significant work which is progressing, hopefully with assistance and input from a wider range of organisations. We are still awaiting a draft MOU from S+SNZ, about how our organisations may better work together .

We continue to provide feedback on such matters as LINZ's development of a Utility Location Standard and the CSLB's standards for licensing. Alex Liggett has joined a working group as part of the Board's next project to now start looking at the competencies required of those seeking a cadastral license.

Alex is also on the STEP working group looking at development of Landonline and has been busy testing prototypes. This trial is due to be extended to a small user group with roll-out to the wider profession planned next year. Alex's feedback and interaction at the coal-face is of great value to ICS.

Last years workshop in Wellington was most successful and enjoyable, despite our Auckland colleagues being unable to attend. Thanks must go to all of the speakers, many from LINZ, but also to Alex Liggett and Paul Durkin for their organisation of that event. Their efforts in again organising the cancelled Dunedin workshop this weekend with many speakers from the University, hopefully will live another day.

The ICS Express continues to be of excellent standard and published on a monthly basis, and there are frequent posts of topical articles to the website.

The "ICS:Chris Hoodsteden Memorial Prize" for the best results in Cadastral Survey 3 at Otago University, was this year awarded to Kade Phillips.

The Cadastral Index still has significant use with over 50 subscribers.

Your committee has met four times via zoom, to discuss administrative matters and other initiatives. I thank them for the many hours that they have put in, but again especially Brent who continues to do much of the heavy lifting for the Institute.

And finally, thank you for the opportunity to be your President over the last four years. I believe the Institute has never been more needed as a conduit for Cadastral practice, to ask the hard questions and contribute common sense solutions.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'Pat Sole', with a large, stylized initial 'P' and a long, sweeping underline.

Pat Sole
President ICS
6 October 2021