

Report of Official NAFTA Meeting No. 4 February 19th, 2000

To: The Canadian Council of Land Surveyors, Annual General Meeting
Ottawa

Attendees:

Canada - Wayne Brubacher, Chair of the Meeting and CCLS NAFTA Committee Chair Dick Wright, CCLS NAFTA Committee member.

The United States of America

Bob Prescott, Chair of the National Society of Professional Surveyors (NSPS)

Malcolm Shaw, Member of the NSPS NAFTA Committee

Al Flores, Member of the NSPS NAFTA Committee and US translator for Spanish.

The United Mexican States

Ing. Lino Solis López Vice-Presidente La Federación de Colegios de Ingenieros

Topógrafos de Los Estados Unidos Mexicanos, A.G. (FECITEUM)

Ingenieros Carlos Arizmendi, Translator for Mexico and Canada.

The objective of the fourth meeting was to wind up or press on with old business and move ahead with the introduction of Canada's Mutual Recognition Document (MRD). The cornerstone of the philosophy of this document is fairness, reciprocity and the acceptance of surveyors licenses from individuals of another NAFTA member country and permit them to practice the full range of geomatics that the host's licenses permit but with the exception of boundary line determination (legal or cadastral).

This document was presented to each of the nine member associations or corporations across Canada which are members of CCLS in order to inform not only the executives and councils of those bodies but also the individual member and seek their support for the mandate to undertake negotiations with the corresponding national associations in the other two countries. It was equally important that the members understood and supported the philosophy.

The MRD was also presented to the Board of Governors of the National Society of Professional Surveyors (NSPS) in Denver and it received unanimous support. The Board, by resolution requested the Board of Directors of NSPS to pursue negotiations with Canada by studying the Canadian MRD and using it as a basis for discussion or writing their own. The philosophy was acceptable to the Board of Governors. The Board of Directors decided to table the motion, partly because no acceptable contact had been made in Mexico.

It has been reported to CCLS that the US is officially on-side with Canada and that the MRD has moved farther than it actually has.

Now at this fourth Official Meeting it was appropriate to reintroduce the MRD. The Mexican delegation understand and support the philosophy and will comment on it officially by June of this year. The US delegation will be presenting it to the National Council of Examiners for Engineering and Surveying (NCEES) through its state licensing Boards which meet in conjunction with the ACSM/NSPS spring meeting in Little Rock Arkansas next month. The writer will be giving the Canadian perspective.

The Power point presentation which was presented at Digby N.S. in 1997, has been updated by Bob Prescott and the writer to reflect the inclusion of Mexico as a NAFTA partner. It will be used at Little Rock and translated into Spanish for use in Mexico. It will be available to any survey organization in any of the three NAFTA countries together with a text document to use for the presentation.

In order to arrive at the point at which we are now ready to negotiate the MRD, the first three meetings were used to establish a feeling of friendship, trust and respect. We needed to know as much as possible about each other as fellow professionals. A compendium of questions and answers was developed about the education, licensing, practice and business of surveying in all three countries. It is a dynamic document and will be expanded as new questions are raised.

A glossary of terms and list of acronyms is also being developed and it will expand as necessary.

The format of the meetings has evolved which worked very well: one or two days of informal meetings with no minutes and no audio recordings followed by the formal meeting. All agenda items are discussed until a consensus is reached. There is a minimum of discussion at the formal meeting - only enough to enter into the record.

The next meeting (5th) will either be in Mexico in September/October or again in Canada, October/November. We expect that all three countries will be prepared to debate the MRD at that meeting.

Wayne Brubacher, Chair,
CCLS NAFTA Committee.