

INSTITUTIONS

Professional Societies

Much of Canada's reputation for excellence is a result of the stringent qualifications required of its geomatics professionals. For example, cadastral surveyors must meet strict Canadian educational and professional requirements before being allowed to offer their services to the public.

National and provincial professional surveying associations issue licences to practise, a responsibility delegated by legislation. "CLS," for instance, indicates a qualified "Canada Land Surveyor," and "ALS" indicates an "Alberta Land Surveyor."

Nearly all geomatics professionals belong to one or more of the numerous professional societies in their fields. Among them are:

- ◊ the Canadian Institute of Surveying and Mapping;
- ◊ the Canadian Council of Land Surveyors; and
- ◊ the Canadian Remote Sensing Society.

Engineering and surveying associations in every province ensure that their members adhere to strict codes of ethics and standards. These associations also publish scientific and technical journals that advance knowledge and maintain vital international links for the exchange of information.

Industry Associations

The private sector's national association is the Geomatics Industry Association of Canada (GIAC), a non-profit business organization founded in 1961. The Association's mission is to support the growth and development of the Canadian geomatics industry. From an

initial membership of 8 firms, the association has grown to over 80 member firms representing all the disciplines within geomatics, including aerial photography, cartography, control surveying, engineering surveying, geodesy, geophysical surveying, land/geographical information processing, land surveying, mining surveying, photogrammetric mapping and remote sensing.

One of the most important of GIAC's services is a government relations program aimed at assisting legislators and senior officials to implement a legislation and policy framework that will enhance the business climate for the industry. Particular emphasis is placed on promoting increased contracting-out of work and improved procurement practices.

The Association represents the industry in formal negotiations with government, and is widely regarded as the industry's official spokesperson. This role was recognized when a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) was signed in 1987 with Energy, Mines and Resources Canada, the leading federal geomatics agency. Within the context of this MOU, co-operative activities are being pursued in export market development, technology transfer and research.

GIAC acts as an information conduit to its member firms and to other organizations and interest groups. Regular newsletters keep members informed about major changes in government legislation, policy and programs, as well as major events and changes within the industry. The Association contributes to relevant government and professional publications, and the views and concerns of the membership are communicated through papers, briefs and reports.

Promotion of the Canadian geomatics industry, both within Canada and abroad, is an important focus for GIAC.

A directory of member firms is widely distributed to potential users of geomatics technology and services. The Association collaborates with government agencies and sister associations in the co-production and distribution of special promotional materials.

GIAC is also involved in the development and delivery of educational programs with a business focus, and regularly co-sponsors technical and professional development programs in concert with national professional associations in the geomatics sector.

