



Our history and membership

We understand that naming places is something people are passionate about.

Our role is to coordinate and communicate the consistent use of place names to ensure they meet the requirements of the whole community, including government bodies and emergency services.

The Committee for Geographical Names of Australasia (CGNA) was formed in 1984 to coordinate place naming activities across Australia and New Zealand. In 1993, we became a standing committee within the Intergovernmental Committee on Surveying & Mapping (ICSM) with the support of Geoscience Australia.

Our members come from Australian state and territory naming boards and committees, New Zealand and other organisations with a role and interest in place naming, including the:

- Australian National Placenames Survey
- Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority
- Australian Antarctic Division
- Australian Hydrographic Office
- Department of Defence.

Through CGNA, Australia and New Zealand participate in the activities of the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names (UNGEGN) and contribute to world best practice in the management of place names.



Docklands, Melbourne, VIC
Parliament House, Canberra, ACT

Place names can be fun!

You may have a good knowledge of your local place names but how much do you know about place names in other parts of Australia or New Zealand?

Test your knowledge in the online Place Name Quiz by visiting our website at www.icsm.gov.au > **Place Names** > **Quiz Time**

We welcome your participation and encourage contributions and feedback on the quiz.

Inquiries and more information

Executive Officer
Intergovernmental Committee on Surveying & Mapping

GPO Box 378
Canberra ACT 2601
t +61 2 6249 9677
f +61 2 6249 9939
e icsm@ga.gov.au
w www.icsm.gov.au > Place Names



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Committee for Geographical Names of Australasia



Auckland, New Zealand

We all use place names everyday to describe our surroundings, where we're going or where we've been.

Rivers, mountains, plains, towns, suburbs, reefs, shoals and undersea features all have names. Whether they are of national or international importance or known only to a handful of people, names connect places to their local communities and often reflect our heritage and culture.

New Zealand and each Australian state and territory — including our Antarctic areas of interest — has a place name registrar, naming board or committee for approving or registering names. However it is the Committee for Geographical Names of Australasia (CGNA) that coordinates place-naming activities across Australia and New Zealand.

Sullivans Cove, Hobart, TAS



So how are places named?

Each year, naming authorities receive proposals for new or altered place names.

These proposals may have been initiated by a member of the public and approved by a local council or other responsible naming authority. Ultimately the proposal is forwarded to the relevant naming authority for endorsement and inclusion in a register or gazetteer of place names.

Generally, naming authorities use their own geographical naming guidelines to assess a proposal before the new or altered place name becomes official. These guidelines are supported by national guidelines produced by CGNA.

Once a place is officially named, it is important to use that name to identify the place.

For example, suburb and locality names form part of your address and are used for essential services such as reliable mail delivery and rapid emergency response. The correct use of place names is also important for map and atlas production, navigation and tourism.

Each naming authority has its own legislation and guidelines for recording place names in its registers or gazetteers. Some registers and gazetteers include variant names and historical names for places and features. Others may include unofficial names that were never formally assigned through the relevant place-naming legislation.

Whatever their status and origin, place names will continue to be preserved as records of our history and culture.



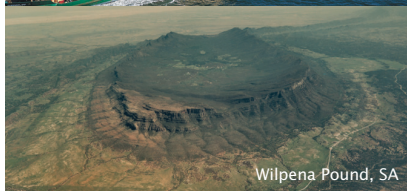
Great Barrier Reef, QLD



Mt House, WA



Sydney Harbour, NSW



Wilpena Pound, SA



Uluru-Kata Tjuta National Park — A Living Cultural Landscape

Our achievements

What's in a name? CD-Rom/Video

This resource highlights the significance of place names and the part they play in everyday life. Starring Ernie Dingo, it tells the story of how places get their names and explains CGNA's role in looking after them.

Geographic Names Internet-based Teaching Package

CGNA developed this innovative Internet-based educational program to support the *What's in a name?* CD-Rom/Video. The activities and lessons are designed for primary school students and promote the significance of place names in the community.

Guidelines for the consistent use of Place Names (Version 1.0)

These guidelines cover the choice, form and application of place names in Australasia and provide each naming authority with a basis for developing their own set of guidelines for naming places.

Gazetteer of Australia

The Gazetteer of Australia is a database of Australia's place names. It is the result of a cooperative effort between the Commonwealth, State and Territory Governments and is compiled annually by Geoscience Australia using data provided by CGNA members.

Guidelines for the Recording and use of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Place Names (April 2001)

CGNA compiled these guidelines to ensure that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander place names are recognised and preserved as part of our Australian heritage.

Glossary of Generic Terms (1996)

This glossary is a list of generic terms or designators commonly used in Australia as part of a place name. The list provides helpful definitions and allocates appropriate designator codes for recording in registers and gazetteers.

Other activities

Dual names

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander place names acknowledge Australia's indigenous heritage and culture.

CGNA is developing guidelines for dual naming, which are useful if you want to recognise both European and Aboriginal cultures through a place name. New Zealand adopts a similar approach in recognising Māori culture, history and language.

Community domain names

Regulation of place names on the internet is problematic. CGNA recognises that individual communities should have a right to use their respective place name. However, this community right should not be seen as bureaucratic or as an inhibitor to commercial activity.

The establishment of the Australian Community Domain (auCD) allows the rights of communities to be respected without the need to over-regulate place names in other commercial domains such as .com.au and .net.au.

The auCD system creates new second-level domains for each state and territory, for example .qld.au.

Communities can then apply to use their respective place name as a website, for example, www.koonwarra.vic.au. These websites are "one-stop shops" for all information relating to the local community.

Tasman Glacier, New Zealand

