



Section 1

Guidelines for Geographic Names 2010

A guide to naming or renaming features,
localities and roads in Victoria

Purpose and Principles

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Section 1: Purpose and Principles

1.1 What are these guidelines?

Anyone interested in the naming process, from a local resident or business owner to a recreational park visitor or government employee, will find in these guidelines step-by-step information on naming, renaming or changing the boundaries of features, localities and roads in Victoria.

These guidelines are mandatory for naming authorities in Victoria. They have been developed through detailed consultation with municipal councils, government departments and emergency response and public service providers. The guidelines are based on national standards and policies and provide a strong basis for standardised and unambiguous naming procedures across the state.

These guidelines are provided for under s. 5 of the *Geographic Place Names Act 1998* (the Act) where it states that:

- (1) The Governor in Council, on the recommendation of the Minister, by Order published in the Government Gazette, may make guidelines relating to procedures to be implemented in selecting, assigning or amending names of places.
- (2) Without limiting the generality of subsection (1), the guidelines:
 - (a) must set out the rules and process to be followed in selecting, assigning or amending a name of a place;
 - (b) must set out the process to be followed before selecting or assigning an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander name of a place;
 - (c) must specify criteria for the assessment of cultural heritage or other significance in relation to the naming of places;
 - (d) must set out requirements for consultation before a name of a place is selected, assigned or amended; and
 - (e) may specify any other matter or thing appropriate in relation to the naming of places.

These guidelines provide details on the Register of Geographic Names (VICNAMES) (refer to Section 1.6), and also offer information on the role of the Minister responsible for the *Geographic Place Names Act 1998*, the Registrar of Geographic Names, the Geographic Place Names Advisory Panel and various naming authorities.

1.2 How do these guidelines work?

These guidelines are intended as an instructional guide to naming, renaming and adjusting the boundaries of features, localities and roads in Victoria.

The information in this guide is divided into four main sections

Section 1: Purpose and Principles

Section 2: Features

Section 3: Localities

Section 4: Roads

Section 1 includes general information about the naming process and details the principles applying to all cases of naming, renaming or changing the boundary of a feature, locality or road. The information in Section 1 should be used in conjunction with the various principles and procedures outlined in Sections 2, 3 and 4.

1.3 Why is there a need for these naming guidelines?

The use of consistent and accurate geographic names is important for a range of daily activities. As the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names (UNGEGN) recognise:

‘Place names can identify and reflect culture, heritage and landscape. Correct use of accurate place names can provide benefits to local, national and international communities engaged in:

- trade and commerce;
- population censuses and statistics;
- property rights and cadastre;
- urban and regional planning;
- environmental management;
- emergency service response and natural disaster relief;
- map and atlas production;
- communications including postal and news services; and
- navigation and tourism.’

These guidelines provide a structure for ensuring that assigning names to features, localities and roads in Victoria is undertaken in a way that is beneficial to the long-term interests of the community, for all of the reasons outlined by UNGEGN.

1.4 What can be named or renamed using these guidelines?

Any feature, locality or road (whether public or private) can be named, renamed or have its boundary changed, using the principles and procedures of these guidelines. Compliance with these guidelines is mandatory for all government-owned or administered features, localities and roads, all topographical (natural) features of greater than local significance, and private roads that are to be included in VICNAMES, the Register of Geographic Names.

When a feature is not owned or maintained by a government department or authority (such as cultural centres, wineries, sporting centres or homesteads) the owners are strongly encouraged to adopt the principles of these guidelines in the naming process. To ensure VICNAMES accurately reflects the status of named features in Victoria the names of these privately owned features are recorded.

Because there are many different types of features in Victoria, the responsibility for preparing naming proposals and submitting them to the Registrar can vary. Section 2 of these guidelines provides details on the different naming processes for features.

Municipal councils are usually the naming authority for localities and further details can be found in Section 3.

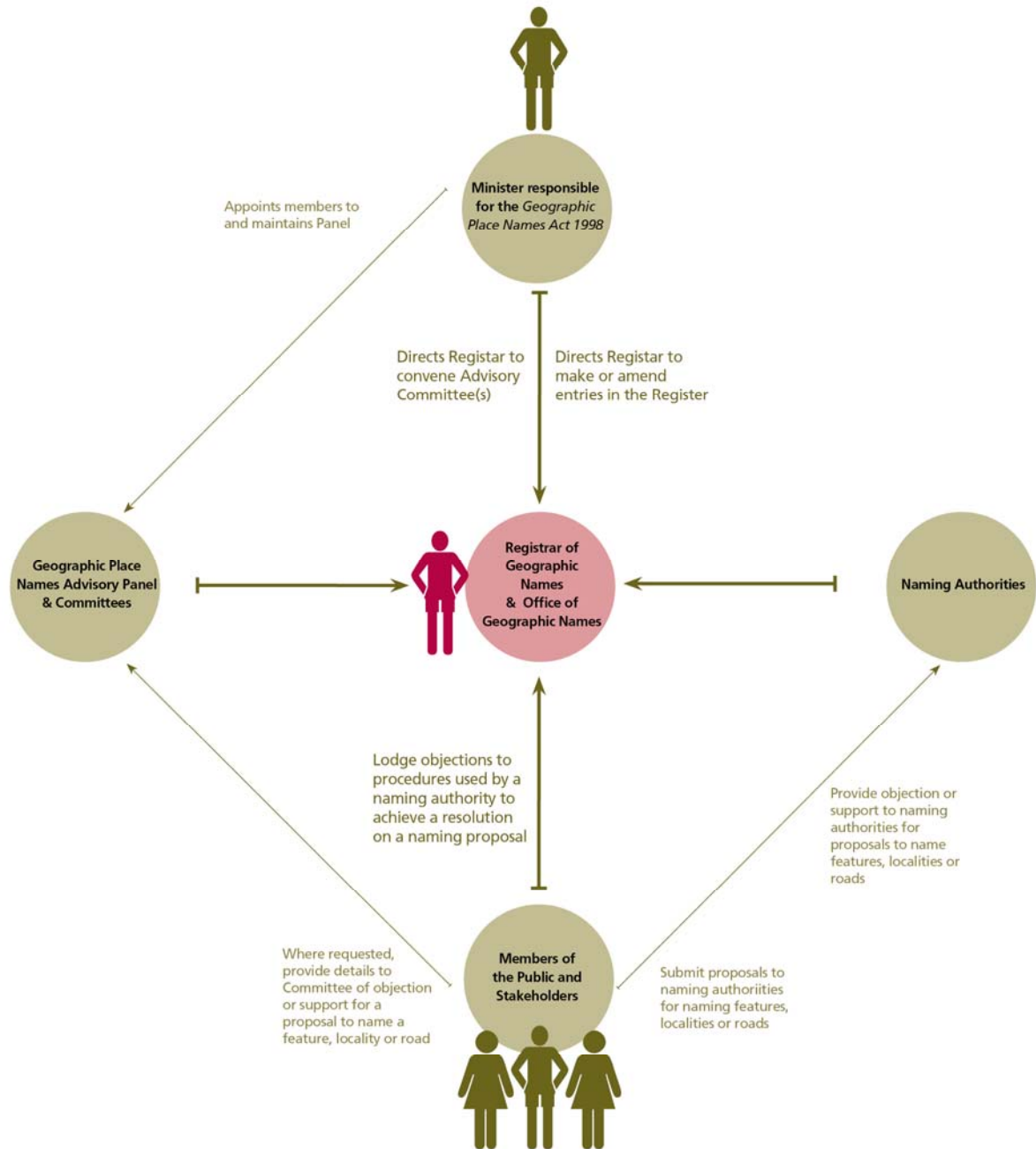
Information on the types of roads registered in VICNAMES is found in Section 4.

1.5 Who can name or rename features, localities and roads in Victoria, and who oversees the process?

Government departments and authorities maintain some of Victoria's features, localities and roads while others are developed and owned privately or by organisations. Following are the three stages in the naming process for individuals or organisations.

Stage	Who Can Do It	Further Information
<p>Who can propose a new name?</p> <p>Who can propose a name change?</p> <p>Who can propose a boundary change?</p>	<p>Anyone (individuals, community groups, organisations, government departments or authorities) can propose a new name, change to an existing name or boundary change.</p>	<p>Section 1.5(a)</p> <p>Section 1.5(b)</p>
<p>Who can develop a naming, renaming or boundary change proposal?</p>	<p>Naming authorities are usually the municipal councils, government departments or authorities who are responsible for submitting a naming proposal to the Registrar of Geographic Names.</p> <p>Details of authorities responsible for developing naming proposals for features are provided in Section 2.</p> <p>For localities, the authority is usually the municipal council(s) within which the locality is situated. Further information is provided in Section 3.</p> <p>Information on authorities responsible for road naming can be found at the beginning of Section 4.</p> <p>A Geographic Place Names Advisory Committee can develop or review a naming proposal if a feature, locality or road is determined to have greater than local significance. Further information is available in Section 1.5(f)</p>	<p>Section 1.5(c)</p> <p>Section 2</p> <p>Section 3</p> <p>Section 4</p> <p>Section 1.5(f)</p>
<p>Who has authority to approve, defer or reject naming proposals for entry in VICNAMES?</p>	<p>These include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the Minister responsible for the <i>Geographic Place Names Act 1998</i>; The Registrar of Geographic Names; and Geographic Place Names Advisory Panel and committees. <p>In addition, if during the course of developing a naming proposal a naming authority finds that it does not conform to the principles of these guidelines, the naming authority can decide to reject the proposal and not submit it to the Registrar.</p>	<p>Section 1.5(d)</p> <p>Section 1.5(e)</p> <p>Section 1.5(f)</p>

Diagram: People, organisations and processes involved in naming, renaming or changing the boundary of a feature, locality or road



(a) Members of the public

Members of the public are welcome to participate in the naming process. They can do this by submitting proposals to the relevant naming authority (refer to Section 1.5(c) for details) for the feature, locality or road they are interested in adjusting the boundaries of, naming or renaming. Further specific details of the naming proposal procedures, and the information the public should provide in a submission to a naming authority, are outlined in the relevant sections (features, localities, roads) of these guidelines.

Members of the public can also be involved by expressing to a naming authority any support or objections to a naming proposal during the public consultation period. Details are provided in Principle 1(M).

If a member of the public believes a naming authority erred in its decision to approve a proposal that does not conform to these guidelines, an appeal can be submitted directly to the Registrar for consideration and resolution. Further details on the objection process are provided in Principle 1(N).

(b) Stakeholders

Stakeholders such as emergency response and other service providers are involved in the naming process in three ways. They can:

- propose a name or boundary for a feature, locality or road to the responsible naming authority;
- alert a naming authority and the Registrar to an issue with an existing name or boundary for a feature, locality or road and request that the matter be investigated; and
- assist the Registrar in determining whether a naming, renaming or boundary change proposal conforms to these guidelines.

(c) Naming authorities

Due to the variety of features, localities and roads that can be named, there are multiple types of naming authorities. Essentially, municipal councils, government departments or authorities and private organisations are naming authorities when they are responsible for developing naming proposals for the features, localities or roads within their jurisdiction. This applies even when they might not be responsible for the maintenance and/or ownership of the feature or road.

Details of which authorities are responsible for developing naming proposals for different features are provided in Section 2.

For localities, the authority is the municipal council(s) within which the locality is situated and details are provided in Section 3.

Information on authorities responsible for road naming can be found in Section 4.

(d) Minister responsible for the *Geographic Place Names Act 1998*

The Minister responsible for the *Geographic Place Names Act 1998* appoints the Registrar of Geographic Names (provided for under s. 7 of the Act) and members of the Geographic Place Names Advisory Panel (provided for under s. 14 of the Act).

Section 11(5) of the Act provides that the Minister may direct the Registrar to enter geographic names into VICNAMES, and under s. 12(1) of the Act may also direct the Registrar to refer a naming matter to a committee for its advice.

For details on the Registrar and the Geographic Place Names Advisory Panel and committees refer to subsections (e) and (f) below.

(e) Registrar of Geographic Names

The powers and functions of the Registrar (set out in s. 8 of the Act) include the power to keep and maintain VICNAMES, the online Register of Geographic Names, and monitor and review compliance with these guidelines.

The Registrar oversees the Office of Geographic Names (OGN), whose primary role is to assist members of the public and naming authorities to develop robust naming proposals for features, localities and roads.

The Registrar maintains VICNAMES in Victoria and enters and/or amends entries as required by the Minister, Geographic Place Names Advisory Committees or naming authorities.

The Registrar is also responsible for maintaining the Geographic Place Names Advisory Panel appointed by the Minister and for allocating members of the panel to select committees, as required from time to time by the Minister, or in instances of a naming proposal being considered to be of greater than local significance (refer to Principle 1(G)).

For details on the Geographic Place Names Advisory Panel and committees refer to subsection (f) below.

(f) Geographic Place Names Advisory Panel and committees

The appointment of members to a Geographic Place Names Advisory Panel and procedures governing its processes and committees are outlined in s. 12 to s. 17 of the Act. Information on why a committee may be convened and what it may consider are provided below.

Reasons why a committee may be convened

Under s. 14(1) of the Act the Minister maintains the panel of people for appointment as members of committees. These committees can be convened by the Registrar for five reasons:

- Under s. 12(1) of the Act the Minister directs the Registrar to convene a committee for its advice on a naming proposal (or discrete set of proposals);
- The Registrar determines that a naming proposal (or discrete set of proposals) is of greater than local significance, and that a committee should be convened to determine a decision on the proposal (see Principle 1(G) for details of what is considered to be of greater than local significance);
- a naming authority determines that a proposal (or discrete set of proposals) received within its jurisdiction requires the oversight and final decision to be made by a committee;
- the Minister, Registrar or a naming authority requires clarification or ratification of a naming principle, policy or procedure; and
- members of the public appeal a naming decision made by a naming authority (submitted as a final proposal to the Registrar).

How a committee is convened

When convening a committee, the Registrar must (as provided under s. 12(3) of the Act) appoint a chairperson and at least two other members. Committee quorum is determined by the majority of member numbers (as provided under s. 16(2) of the Act).

From time to time the Minister or Registrar might co-opt staff from relevant organisations or government departments and authorities to be members of a select committee. These members will be co-opted to provide assistance and advice to the appointed panel members on the committee.

What a committee considers

Committees should undertake the following to consider a naming proposal; determine the answer to a question of principles, policies or procedures; or review a proposal from a naming authority:

- determine whether the naming proposal in its current form conforms to all required principles, policies and procedures of these guidelines;
- seek further supporting evidence, if required, from the naming authority, government departments or development bodies, and other interested parties such as affected local land owners, businesses or residents;
- consult with relevant emergency response or public service organisations if a question of public safety or confusion might arise; and
- consider all information for its relevance to the principles of the guidelines, especially all objections received from members of the public and emergency response or other public service organisations.

How a committee decides

To reach a final decision, a committee will determine the merits of the naming proposal or identify issues arising from application of the current principles and policies outlined in these guidelines. Based on this determination a committee will provide advice to the Registrar that outlines how the naming proposal or clarification of principles and policies should proceed.

When a committee is considering objections lodged by members of the public to a proposal made by a naming authority, the committee will determine whether the naming authority acted in accordance with these guidelines.

If it is determined that the naming authority acted in accordance with these guidelines then the committee should recommend acceptance of the naming proposal.

If it is determined that the naming authority did not act in accordance with these guidelines then the committee should provide recommendations on how to resolve the issues.

Section 12(3) of the Act provides that the final decision on a question arising from a meeting must be determined by three members or a majority of present members' votes. If a committee vote is hung, the chair has the casting vote.

As provided under s. 13 of the Act, a committee must provide final advice to the Registrar on a matter to which it has been referred. Under s. 11(3) of the Act the Registrar must make entries or alterations to VICNAMES as advised by a committee.

1.6 What are the Register of Geographic Names and VICNAMES?

Section 9 of the Act provides for a Register of Geographic Names, which includes place names and the names of streets and roads (as provided under Part II of the *Survey Co-ordination Act 1958*).

The Register of Geographic Names is an electronic system known as VICNAMES, which can be accessed through the Internet at www.dse.vic.gov.au/vicnames.

Section 9(2) of the Act determines that the Register of Geographic Names can be kept in whichever format the Registrar prefers.

VICNAMES stores information and data related to all officially registered and recorded feature, locality and road names in Victoria. For each entry VICNAMES stores the following information:

- name;
- historical name (if available);
- history of the name (if available);
- dual name (if relevant);
- traditional name (if available);
- status of name;
- coordinates (centroid);
- local government area where the feature is located;
- naming authority;
- gazette notice date; and
- registration date.

VICNAMES is linked to Vicmap, the Victorian Government spatial data set. Linking VICNAMES to Vicmap ensures that the information in VICNAMES is aligned to the spatial representation of features, localities and roads, and that Vicmap contains reference to the officially registered or recorded names for features, localities and roads.

1.7 Status of names in VICNAMES

There are eight status categories applied to names in VICNAMES, the most common of which are Registered and Recorded:

Status	Type	Description
Registered	Registered	This type is legally recognised for the purposes of the Act as an official name for a feature, locality or road administered or coordinated by a government authority.
	Dual	This type consists of one name comprised of one Indigenous and one non-Indigenous name, which must be used together as the registered legally recognised name for the feature (refer to Principle 1(L)).
	Base	This is a lifetime name for a feature, if the recorded name is subject to limited-term private contracts (refer to Principle 2(D)).
Recorded	Recorded	This is the name of a feature if a private entity has naming rights (refer to Section 2.2).
	Traditional	This is a traditional Indigenous Australian name, which is not in official use for a feature (refer to Section 2.5).
	Historical	This is a name that is no longer in official use but is recorded for information purposes.
	Interim	A working title for a new school while the formal school naming process is being undertaken.
Proposed	Proposed New	This is a new name for a feature, locality or road, which is proposed but has not yet been approved by the Registrar.
	Proposed Change	This is a proposed new name for an already named feature, locality or road, which has not yet been approved by the Registrar.

1.8 Principles

The following principles **must be used in conjunction with the relevant specific principles outlined in the three other sections of these guidelines** relating to features, localities and roads. They are designed to ensure that there can be no confusion, errors or discrimination caused by the naming, renaming or boundary change process.

Principle 1(A) Language

- Geographic names, except when they are proper nouns, must be written in standard Australian English or a recognised format of an Australian Indigenous language local to the area of the feature, locality or road.
- Geographic names should be easy to pronounce, spell and write, and preferably not exceed three words (including feature or road type) and/or 25 characters.
 - An exception to this is in the use of Australian Indigenous languages when it is accepted that traditional names appearing at first to be complex will, over time, become familiar and easy to use within the community.
- Diacritical marks (symbols such as $\acute{}$, $\grave{}$ or $\bar{}$) will be omitted from names drawn from languages that use such marks. For example, Cape Reamur (not Cape Réamur).
- An apostrophe must be deleted from geographic names written with a final 's, and the possessive 's should not be included in the first instance. For example, Wilsons Promontory (not Wilson's Promontory).
- Abbreviations are not allowed. An exception applies to the use of the honorific Saint. For example, Mount must be registered or recorded in full, but Saint can be recorded as St if requested by the naming authority.
- For the purposes of consistency, names starting with Mc or Mac must not have a space included between the Mc or Mac and the rest of the name.

Principle 1(B) Recognising the public interest

Regard needs to be given to the long-term consequences and effects upon the wider community of naming, renaming or adjusting the boundary of a feature, locality or road. Changes to existing names or boundaries will affect not only the current community but also future residents, businesses, property owners and visitors. Changes to existing names and boundaries of localities and roads can affect emergency response zones, land titles and addresses. A proposal will be registered only when the long-term benefits to the community can be shown to outweigh any private or corporate interests, or short-term effects.

Principle 1(C) Ensuring public safety

Geographic names and boundaries must not risk public and operational safety for emergency response, or cause confusion for transport, communication and mail services. Many emergency response and other public services (such as mail) are determined by locality boundaries or road extents, and proposals must ensure that operations will not be adversely affected.

For example, the boundary of a locality must be applied in a way that makes sense not only for the local community, but also for visitors. Similarly, the extent of a road name should ensure easy navigation for pedestrians and vehicles along the entire route from one end to the other.

Principle 1(D) Ensuring names are not duplicated

Place names must not be duplicated. Duplicates are considered to be two (or more) names within close proximity, and those which are identical or have similar spelling or pronunciation. Examples of names which are similar and considered to be duplicates are White, Whyte, Wite and Wiet.

Duplication is not allowed within the one locality or within the following distances:

- metropolitan urban area, within 5 kilometres;
- regional urban area, within 15 kilometres; and
- rural or remote area within 30 kilometres.

If a naming authority is uncertain of which classification to apply, it should contact the OGN for advice.

If a feature, locality or road is located near a state boundary, care should also be taken to avoid duplication with names in the other state according to the distances prescribed above.

The VICNAMES website can be used to check for a duplicate feature, locality and road name (refer to User Notes 1, 2 and 3 from the website <http://www.dse.vic.gov.au/vicnames> for details).

Principle 1(E) Directional names to be avoided

Cardinal directions (north, south, east and west) must be avoided. A proposed name that uses a cardinal direction to distinguish itself from another similar name is considered to be a duplicate name. In these instances a different name should be chosen to allow for a clear distinction between the two or more features, localities or roads.

An example of an unacceptable name is Smith Street being renamed Smith Street West and Smith Street East – either one or both ends of the street must be renamed.

Principle 1(F) Assigning extent to a feature, locality or road

When a proposal to name a feature, locality or road is being developed the naming authority must clearly define the area and/or extent to which the name will apply. At a minimum, a proposal for a feature (excluding a waterway) must include the centroid coordinates, a locality must include the polygon attributes and a road or waterway must include the line details.

For example, the name of a road should apply from one end of the road to the other, i.e. to the points where the road finishes or intersects with other roads.

The name of a waterway should apply from the beginning of the watercourse to its confluence with another waterway or body.

Principle 1(G) Linking the name to the place

Place names should be relevant to the local area, with preference given to unofficial names used by the local community. Infrastructure features should use the name of the locality. For example, railway stations should be named after the locality in which the station is located. Names of private estates should not be applied to features or localities to avoid possible addressing issues in the future.

When a feature, locality or road is of greater than local significance the name should be relevant to the wider community. A feature, locality or road considered of greater than local significance will usually fall into one or more of the following categories:

- it is located in two or more municipal areas;
- it is located in a significant tourist precinct;
- it is proposed to be created as part of a State or Federal Government project;
- it is a major waterway;
- it is a major undersea or shoreline feature;
- it has major cultural, natural or recreational landscape features; and
- it is linked to a significant Aboriginal feature, story or landscape.

In these instances a naming authority can request that the Registrar convenes a Geographic Place Names Advisory Committee to develop or determine a decision on a naming proposal. Refer to Section 1.5(f) for further details.

Principle 1(H) Using commemorative names

Naming often commemorates an event, person or place.

The names of people who are still alive should be avoided because community attitudes and opinions can change over time.

A commemorative name applied to a locality or road should use only the surname of a person, not a first or given names. A commemorative name applied to a feature can use the first name and surname of a person; although, it is preferred that only the surname is used.

The initials of a given name are not to be used in any instances.

This approach is to ensure that emergency and postal services are not delayed through inconsistent application of the name. For example, a feature named *Smith Park* is easier to identify than one named *John Edward Smith Park* if the possibility of John Park, Edward Park, John Smith Park etc. could be used by the public.

In exceptional circumstances, if the naming authority wishes to name a feature, locality or road after a living person, they must apply in writing to the Registrar to seek exemption from this principle. The naming authority must outline the reasons for proposing a living person's name and seek this exemption prior to commencing any public consultation or reaching a decision on the final naming proposal.

Principle 1(I) Using commercial and business names

For similar reasons to those outlined in Principle 1(H), naming authorities should not name places after:

- commercial businesses;
- trade names; and
- non-profit organisations.

Exceptions can apply where the business or organisation has had an association with the area over a substantial period of time and is held in strong regard by the community. In these circumstances the naming authority must apply in writing to the Registrar to seek exemption from this principle prior to commencing any public consultation or reaching a decision on the final naming proposal. The naming authority must outline in the exemption request reasons for proposing the name and provide evidence of the business or organisation's association with the area.

Principle 1(J) Names must not be discriminatory

Place names must not cause offence on the basis of race, ethnicity, religion, disability, sexuality or gender.

Principle 1(K) Recognition and use of Indigenous Australian names

The use of traditional Indigenous Australian names is encouraged for features, localities and roads, subject to agreement from the relevant Indigenous communities. The identification of a name (or names) of Indigenous heritage is encouraged to be undertaken by Indigenous groups who form a consultative group to the naming authority (refer to procedures section below).

Consultation with the relevant Indigenous communities should be undertaken prior to any public consultation on the proposed name(s). In instances when there is more than one relevant Indigenous group, naming authorities must consult with all parties. Naming authorities are strongly encouraged to establish an Indigenous consultation process and to refer to the supplementary document *Consulting with Indigenous Groups* available from www.dse.vic.gov.au/namingguidelines.

Procedure

Naming authorities should establish an Indigenous consultation process, which includes collaboration with the Traditional Owner and/or broader Indigenous group(s) that have heritage associated with the area in which the feature, locality or road is to be named or renamed. Where more than one group has an interest in the area, a consultative group should be established. Where only one group has an interest in the area, consultation can be undertaken by sending a letter outlining the proposal and seeking feedback within 30 days. Or, preferably, contact should be made by telephone or face-to-face meetings to discuss the proposal.

Consent is considered to be approval for the proposal at a meeting or during a phone conversation with, or through a letter written and signed by, the relevant representative of the Indigenous organisation.

If there is no response from an Indigenous organisation to the request for consultation and collaboration, the naming authority should contact the OGN. The OGN can assist the naming authority to seek further advice or information from the Victorian Aboriginal Corporation for Languages and/or Aboriginal Affairs Victoria. If a naming authority is unable to obtain a response to, or acceptance of, a proposal for a name, it can request that the Registrar considers the naming proposal and, if appropriate, refers it to the Indigenous Names Committee of the Geographic Place Names Advisory Panel for its advice.

Further information on how to identify local Indigenous community groups, convene consultation meetings and respond to issues that may arise, is available from the supplementary document *Consulting with Indigenous Groups*, available from www.dse.vic.gov.au/namingguidelines.

Principle 1(L) Dual names

Australian states and territories use dual names as a way of recognising the names given to places by different enduring cultural and language groups.

In Victoria, the approach to giving simultaneous and joint recognition of two cultures through naming is to form a dual name with two distinct name parts, usually one part of non-Indigenous language origin and the other of Indigenous Australian language origin.

Naming authorities wishing to develop dual naming proposals need to ensure the following issues are considered.

- Dual names may be applied to natural topographical features (e.g. islands, mountains, mountain ranges and rivers) and mapped or bounded areas such as state forests, national parks, Crown land reserves and open space recreation reserves. Dual names cannot be adopted for:
 - localities, towns or rural districts;
 - infrastructure; and
 - constructed features such as roads, highways, bridges or communication towers.

- Dual naming is a priority consideration when a feature already has a widely accepted name of non-Indigenous origin and newly available information indicates that an Indigenous name could also apply.

In these cases, if a dual name is proposed, the non-Indigenous name part would appear first in the combined name, as long as it best reflects local community usage.

- If a non-Indigenous name has weak support in the general community and the origin and application of an Indigenous name is well supported, a dual name may be formed with the Indigenous name part appearing first. In some cases, a single well-supported Indigenous name could be substituted for the weakly supported non-Indigenous name, instead of adopting a dual-name.
- Dual names will be formally registered without any distinction between non-Indigenous and Indigenous name parts other than sequence. If a visual separator is required for clarity, it should be a solidus (i.e. /) preceded and followed by a space. Two options are available, as shown below, to either include the feature type with both names (once only) or only with the non-Indigenous name. For example, either of these examples would be acceptable:
 - Grampians / Gariwerd National Park; or
 - Grampians National Park / Gariwerd.
- Dual names once registered are to be used in full, particularly on maps, signs and legal documents. Shortened versions are not to be used.

Principle 1(M) Consulting with the public

Naming authorities must consult with the public on any naming proposal. The level and form of consultation can vary depending on the naming proposal. Refer to the procedure information below for details.

This principle does not apply to the naming of new roads within subdivisions where there are currently no residents, businesses or rate payers who will be directly affected. This principle also does not apply to the naming of private roads or VicRoads' process of applying administrative names to roads.

Procedure

There are two types of community groups to consult with regarding a naming, renaming or boundary change proposal:

- the **immediate community**, which includes residents, ratepayers and businesses within the immediate area directly affected by the proposal; and
- the **extended community**, which includes residents, ratepayers and businesses surrounding the area directly affected by the proposal; any visitor groups to the area; and government or non-government organisations with an interest in or who service the area.

As a minimum, when a proposed naming, renaming or boundary change will affect current addresses, the naming authority must contact the immediate community in writing (by letter or email).

If a proposal has the potential to affect residents, ratepayers and businesses with regard to the Aboriginal Heritage Regulations 2007 (refer to Principle 2(B)), the naming authority must contact the immediate community in writing (by letter or email).

If a proposal will not affect current addresses the naming authority must consult with the public by advertising the proposal in local or statewide newspapers. The naming authority can also promote the proposal to the immediate and extended community on a website, through letters, newsletters or magazines, email contact lists and public notices.

Communication through letter or advertising must outline the following information:

- the location and extent of the feature, locality or road proposed to be named, renamed or have boundaries changed (with a map and written description – to reduce advertising costs the public can be referred to a website and council office to view these details);
- the reason the particular name and/or new boundaries have been chosen for the proposal;
- an invitation for public feedback with a closing date 30 days from the date of the letter and/or advertisement (whichever is later); and
- (if the proposal is accepted by the naming authority and approved by the Registrar) an indication that Australia Post may continue to record and recognise the old address for a period of six to 12 months to ensure a smooth transition from the old address to the new address (the letter should also indicate that Australia Post may not guarantee the delivery of incorrectly addressed mail and advise customers to use their official address).

In order to involve the community and/or ascertain public support for a naming, renaming or boundary change proposal, naming authorities are strongly recommended to survey the immediate and/or extended communities.

Any survey must refer to these guidelines and include the following information:

- that the non-return of surveys will be treated as 'tacit approval' for the proposal; and
- that there are two questions that must be responded to –
 1. Do you approve the proposal to name/rename/adjust the boundaries of _____?
 2. Do you support the proposed name _____ or boundary location (as shown on the map)?

Information on compiling and analysing the results of a survey are available from the supplementary document *Consulting with the Wider Community* available from www.dse.vic.gov.au/namingguidelines.

Naming authorities are encouraged to, but do not have to, also use the survey to invite the immediate and/or extended communities to nominate suitable or preferred names or boundaries.

When the naming authority has surveyed the community to establish a set of suitable or preferred names or boundaries, the community must then be re-consulted on the final determined name/boundaries for the proposal.

Further information on consultation processes including identifying people and groups to consult, drafting letters, advertisements, distributing surveys, holding public meetings and responding to objections, is available in the supplementary document *Consulting with the Wider Community* available from www.dse.vic.gov.au/namingguidelines.

Principle 1(N) Lodging, considering and addressing objections

Lodging objections

Any person or organisation can lodge objections to a naming, renaming or boundary change proposal during the public consultation period administered by the relevant naming authority. Objections must be lodged directly with the naming authority within the 30 days allocated for feedback (refer to Principle 1(M)).

Considering objections

Any objections received during the public consultation period must be given consideration by the naming authority. Only objections that relate to concerns about the proposal not conforming to the principles of these guidelines must be addressed by the naming authority. If a survey was used to determine community support for a proposal, information on analysing the survey results is available in the supplementary document *Consulting with the Wider Community* available from www.dse.vic.gov.au/namingguidelines.

If community support for a proposal is minimal, but the proposal has been made based on public safety and/or emergency response concerns, the naming authority should attempt to refine and/or change the proposal so that it meets community expectations. If the naming authority believes that community support will not be forthcoming, and non-approval of the proposal will maintain the risk to public safety, it should seek the OGN's advice. The OGN can refer the matter to a Geographic Place Names Advisory Committee (refer to Section 1.5(f) for further details)

If the naming authority accepts the proposal and lodges it with the Registrar for consideration, it must provide details of what the objections were and how they will be or have been dealt with.

If the naming authority decides to uphold the objections it can choose to abandon the proposal or refine and/or change it to ensure it conforms to these guidelines. If the naming authority decides to refine and/or change the proposal it must then undertake another round of community consultation in order to determine community support.

Addressing objections

The naming authority must write to objectors and when objections relate to concerns about the proposal not conforming to the principles of these guidelines, the response must outline:

- how objections have been dealt with; and
- why the naming proposal was either accepted and sent to the Registrar for consideration and inclusion in VICNAMES, or rejected and how it will subsequently be refined, changed or abandoned.

In cases of the naming authority accepting the proposal, the letter to objectors also needs to include details of how they can appeal to the Registrar. An appeal may only be made if the objector can demonstrate that either:

- the naming authority did not consider the objections during its deliberations; or
- the proposal does not reasonably conform to the principles of these guidelines.

The letter to objectors needs to indicate that an appeal to the Registrar must be lodged within 30 days of the naming authority accepting the proposal and/or sending the letter to the objector (whichever is later).

Principle 1(O) Notification of a naming decision

Only after a naming authority receives notification from the Registrar that an official naming, boundary or name change has been registered in VICNAMES can it notify affected members of the immediate and/or extended community and other interested stakeholders.

Procedure

Within 30 days of a proposal's approval the OGN will publish a notice on the Proposals webpage at www.dse.vic.gov.au/namingplaces and send notification to the naming authority. The notice will include a link to an electronic map that naming authorities can download and distribute to all local stakeholders, including local emergency and utility service providers.

If addresses have been affected the naming authority must notify residents, ratepayers and businesses in the immediate community. The naming authority should also notify the following local organisations and stakeholders:

- Australia Post offices;
- real estate agents;
- gas, water and electricity suppliers;
- council rates department; and
- local mapping agencies.

It is recommended that naming authorities provide details of the approved proposal to the following local organisations that might have an interest in knowing the new or altered name and boundaries.

It is important to distribute this information locally (as follows) because there can be a delay between official notification to statewide bodies and details filtering through various systems for updating hard-copy map books:

- police station;
- ambulance branch;
- Country Fire Authority Brigade and/or Metropolitan Fire Brigade Station;
- State Emergency Service local headquarters; and
- tourist information centres.

The OGN will organise for notification to be sent to statewide and national bodies, including emergency and postal services, and spatial information or mapping organisations. These include:

- Australia Post;
- Emergency Services Telecommunications Authority;
- Emergency Management Spatial Information Network Australia – (Victorian Committee) members including Ambulance Victoria, Victoria Police, Country Fire Authority, State Emergency Service, Department of Sustainability and Environment, Department of Justice and Department of Human Services;
- Real Estate Institute of Victoria;
- Australian Bureau of Statistics;
- Australian Electoral Commission; and
- Melway, UBD and other spatial information or mapping agencies.

This information is also distributed through various networks to international organisations such as Google Earth and Microsoft Virtual Earth.

Principle 1(P) Signage

In all instances, naming authorities must not erect or display signage prior to receiving advice from the Registrar that the naming proposal has been approved, gazetted and registered or recorded in VICNAMES. Existence of signage prior to lodging a naming proposal with the Registrar is not a valid argument for the name to be registered.

How signage should be designed and displayed can differ according to whether it is a feature, locality or road being named. Specific information on signage is provided in Sections 2, 3 and 4 of these guidelines.

1.9 Other legislation, regulations and policies relevant to geographic naming

- *Local Government Act 1989*
- *Road Management Act 2004*
- *Planning and Environment Act 1987*
- *Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006*
- *Aboriginal Heritage Regulations 2007*
- *AS/NZS4819 Geographic Information – Rural and Urban Addressing*
- *Survey Co-ordination Act 1958*

1.10 Updating these guidelines

With constant improvements and changes in the spatial information sector, it may be necessary to occasionally update these guidelines to ensure up-to-date standards are reflected. Updates will need to be approved by the Governor in Council, and any approved amendments will be notified to naming authorities and other interested parties.