

15 September 2015

Adam Fennessy  
Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning  
Level 17, 8 Nicholson Street  
East Melbourne  
Victoria 3002

Dear Mr Fennessy,

The Local Government Spatial Reference Group (LGSRG) is the peak body representing spatial practitioners from local government across Victoria. The LGSRG would like to formally register its concern regarding the level of government funding currently allocated to ongoing maintenance, the current maintenance backlog issue and the lack of proactive improvement of the Vicmap Land Administration Theme (LAT) spatial products, in particular corrections of errors within the Vicmap Property datasets (known as the M2 process).

All Victorian councils rely on the Vicmap LAT spatial datasets and timely, well resourced maintenance is necessary to ensure the ongoing value of this essential data. Funding cuts to the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning's (DELWP) data maintenance and improvement program impacts on DELWP's ability to effectively manage the dynamic nature of the Vicmap's LAT datasets, in particular property, address, transport and features of interest.

Delays in the processing of changes to these datasets cause issues for councils that rely on the data to link and reconcile with internal business systems. Delays from when physical changes occur in the field to when the data is updated to reflect those changes often causes confusion, particularly where new land developments are involved. This can have a flow on effect of adding costs to the land purchaser due to delays in land development approvals.

The LGSRG is concerned about the possibility (and reality in a small number of cases) that councils will decide to turn away from the Vicmap LAT products and maintain one or a number of datasets in-house. The LGSRG is committed to ensuring that the Vicmap LAT products continue to be viewed as the authoritative source of spatial base data in Victoria, however, we believe that council trust in this data has been eroded and needs to be restored by an obvious and well communicated strategic direction and commitment from DELWP to the ongoing quality of the data.

Thank you for your consideration regarding this matter. I would welcome the opportunity to discuss the concerns of local government with you. Please feel free to contact me regarding any additional information that may be of assistance.

Sincerely,

Barrett Higman (Alpine Shire Council)  
Chair  
Local Government Spatial Reference Group  
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