

R E P O R T .

Melbourne, 25th May, 1912.

To the Honorable
The Minister of State for Home Affairs.

SIR,

In response to your invitation, the Surveyors-General of all the States, except Western Australia, the Surveyor-General and the Government Astronomer of New Zealand met in Conference with the Director of Commonwealth Lands and Surveys at the Federal Parliament House on Monday, the 20th May, 1912.

After the election of the Surveyor-General of Victoria as Chairman, the members of the Conference, having been cordially welcomed by the Minister for Home Affairs, entered upon their duties.

Each subject submitted has received our earnest consideration, and we hope and believe that the resolutions, all unanimously adopted (a copy of which accompanies this Report), will, if carried into effect, prove of distinct benefit both to the Commonwealth as a whole, and to the States individually.

Regarding the Geodetic Survey, though this will entail expenditure by the Commonwealth, experience extending over the last twenty years shows that the cost of the primary work is about one-fifteenth of a penny per acre, and we are convinced that any outlay involved in the carrying out of this survey is amply justified.

The proposed contribution by the Commonwealth towards the preparation of an International Map of the World is a recognition of Australia's obligation to take part in a matter of world-wide interest.

The cordial relations that have existed between the members of this Conference, and the results attained, are evidence of the advantages that accrue from the association of representatives of the Commonwealth, the Dominion, and the States; and the interchange of views between those whose experience covers so wide a range must be advantageous, and in the interests of all concerned.

We respectfully recommend for your favourable consideration these resolutions, with the assurance that they have been exhaustively discussed, and that, in framing them, this Conference desires only to assist in the advancement of the interests of Australia.

We have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your obedient Servants,

(Signed)

J. M. REED,
JAMES MACKENZIE,
FRED. POATE,
ALLAN A. SPOWERS,
E. A. COUNSEL,
E. M. SMITH,
C. E. ADAMS,
CHARLES ROBT. SCRIVENER.

RESOLUTIONS.

Subjects of Agenda Paper.	Resolutions Agreed Upon.
1. Geodetic Survey of Australia.	<p>1. That a Geodetic Survey of Australia should be undertaken.</p> <p>2. That, in order to give effect to the foregoing resolution, this Conference respectfully recommends that such survey be undertaken by the Commonwealth Government, and submits in support thereof the following reasons :—</p> <p>(a) That the time has arrived when the Commonwealth should take its place in the scientific investigations of the world, not the least important of which are the determination of the figure of the earth, its density, and other cognate matters.</p> <p>(b) That work of this character, involving the highest form of survey, should be effected under the supreme authority of Australia, as it is essential that it should be carried out with the greatest degree of accuracy on an uniform basis and a definite plan, the individual parts being co-ordinated and eventually forming one homogeneous whole.</p> <p>(c) That the system which has hitherto prevailed by which the individual States carried out this work with instruments of varying character has resulted in divergent standards of accuracy, rendering the work, to a great extent, unsatisfactory, and, though much of it is of high grade, portions of it are impossible of reconciliation and co-ordination with a Continental scheme.</p> <p>(d) That the desirableness of this work being undertaken by the Commonwealth Government is evidenced by the fact that the Geodetic Survey of the United States is carried out under the direct control of the Federal Government, and that the South African Geodetic Survey is also under one central control.</p> <p>(e) That such survey is absolutely necessary for the production of accurate maps, will be of high value in connexion with cadastral and geological surveys, and form a basis for topographical work for defence and other purposes. It will, moreover, provide a standard of accuracy for surveys of every description throughout the Commonwealth.</p> <p>(f) That it will afford an invaluable base to which settlement surveys already effected can be connected, providing data for re-establishing boundaries, which, with increasing density of settlement, becomes a matter of great importance. Further, as regards the sparsely occupied areas of Australia, such a survey, if carried out in advance of settlement, will be of the greatest utility and assistance in effecting the settlement surveys which can, at any future time, be reproduced with a minimum error, and at a relatively low cost, preventing litigation, consequent upon other methods.</p> <p>3. That the Geodetic Survey referred to in the resolutions submitted by the Committee shall embrace the Geodetic and Major triangulation only.</p> <p>4. That, in view of the precision with which the base lines of New Zealand have been measured, it is desirable that the New Zealand survey should be brought into line with the Geodetic Surveys of the world by the use of instruments capable of carrying out the angular work with an equal degree of accuracy, and so that the present Trigonometrical Survey may be strengthened by a series of main triangles.</p>
2. Revision of the map of Australia, now in course of preparation, with regard principally to the nomenclature.	<p>1. (a) That the proofs of the Commonwealth Map of Australia be referred to the respective Surveyors-General for revision, inviting them to confer with the local Geographical Society and Marine Authorities. Map when revised to be adopted for present use.</p> <p>(b) That, later, the map be referred to the Admiralty and the Royal Geographical Society of England for suggestions.</p> <p>(c) That final review of the map be made by the Committee of the Surveyors-General of the States and the Director of Commonwealth Lands and Surveys.</p>

Subjects of Agenda Paper.	Resolutions Agreed Upon.
3. Discussion on the participation of Australia and New Zealand in the production of a map of the world on a scale of 1 in 1,000,000.	1. That the preparation of the portion of the map of the world, embracing the Commonwealth of Australia and the Dominion of New Zealand on a scale of 1 in 1,000,000, is a work that should be undertaken by the Commonwealth and the Dominion of New Zealand. As New Zealand is in a position to do its own portion, this Conference recommends that the work, as regards Australia, should be carried out under the direction of the Commonwealth Government, the respective States being asked to provide all available information.
4. Issue of licences by the Commonwealth Government and reciprocity between the several States, the Dominion of New Zealand, and the Commonwealth.	1. That this Conference is of opinion that, as soon as the Commonwealth Government gives necessary authority for the creation of a Board of Examiners for Surveyors operating in Commonwealth territory, such Board should be admitted to the reciprocal arrangement now existing between the various States and the Dominion of New Zealand, and recommends that this resolution be referred for the consideration of the reciprocating Boards.
5. Commonwealth Lands Titles Office.	1. That the Surveyors-General would, as far as possible, furnish the Director of Commonwealth Lands and Surveys with information regarding "Lands Titles" methods in their respective States, and no further action was considered necessary.
6. On the desirableness of uniformity in the declarations made by surveyors on plans of survey under the various Lands Acts and Torrens Act.	1. This Conference recommends (as regards surveys under the Real Property Acts) for the favorable consideration of the Surveyors Boards of the States the form of certificate under the Real Property Acts, as expressed in the Authorized Surveyors Declaration for Land Transfer Surveys in New Zealand, viz.:— <p style="text-align: center;">"I, _____ of _____ licensed surveyor, do solemnly and sincerely declare that this plan has been made from surveys executed by me (or under my own personal supervision, inspection, and field check), and that both plan and survey are correct, and have been made in accordance with the regulations of the Surveyors Board, dated _____</p> <p style="text-align: center;">"And I make this solemn declaration conscientiously believing the same to be true, and by virtue of the provisions of _____</p> <p style="text-align: center;">"Declared at _____ &c."</p> <p>No resolution was adopted regarding the form of certificate under the various Lands Acts.</p>
7. The carrying out of surveys by the several States for the Commonwealth Government.	1. That the procedure to be adopted in connexion with such surveys as may be effected by the States for the Commonwealth should be as follows:— <p>(a) That, in order to avoid delay, the Director of Commonwealth Lands and Surveys and the Surveyors-General of the States be authorized to communicate directly with one another in connexion with such surveys.</p> <p>(b) That full particulars as to the required surveys should be supplied to the Surveyor-General of the State in which the survey is desired, with a request that the survey should be made.</p> <p>(c) That the Surveyor-General should supply necessary detailed information for the use of the surveyor, and issue requisite instructions.</p> <p>(d) That the surveyor should carry out the survey in accordance with State Regulations, and supply certified plan and field notes in duplicate.</p> <p>(e) That the State officials should examine the plan, and the Surveyor-General (or other authorized officer) certify in the usual manner, both as to plans and accounts, and then transmit one plan with one copy of field notes to the Director, retaining the other plan and copy of field notes for State record purposes.</p> <p>(f) That the Commonwealth should pay all costs, both field and office.</p>
8. The spelling of names of Australian places.	1. That, in the opinion of this Conference, it is desirable that, as far as practicable, the system of orthography adopted by the Royal Geographical Society, the Colonial and Foreign Service, the Admiralty, and War Office, for native names should be adopted, as well as an uniform method of spelling Australian place names.