

# **ASPRS Policy and Procedures concerning Licensure of Photogrammetrists and GIS Professionals**

## **Background**

Licensing of photogrammetrists and GIS professionals has been discussed by various segments of the professional community many times over the past several decades, often with ASPRS participation in the dialogue. In the early 1990's, the Florida Region of ASPRS worked with the Florida surveying societies to develop a strategy for licensing photogrammetrists as part of a revamped licensing strategy in Florida, which eventually resulted in Florida's licensing of "Professional Surveyors and Mappers." Following the Florida effort, the National Council of Examiners for Engineering and Surveying (NCEES) initiated a 1995 revision of the Model Law for Surveying to include photogrammetry and GIS/LIS activities. Unfortunately, this effort by NCEES was not well publicized in the community and did not include provisions for "grandfathering" of existing practitioners.

ASPRS, along with the Management Association for Private Photogrammetric Surveyors (MAPPS) and the Geomatics Division of the American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE) became aware of these changes in 1996 and generated a number of letters to NCEES expressing concern. This resulted in a "summit meeting" of the Presidents and Executive Directors of five organizations, including ASPRS, MAPPS, ASCE, the American Congress on Surveying and Mapping (ACSM) and the National Society of Professional Surveyors (NSPS) in April 1997 at which it was agreed to mutually support the licensing of photogrammetrists.

Further, it was agreed among the organizations to work together, in a consensus approach, to advise NCEES on how best to accomplish licensure of both photogrammetrists and GIS/LIS practitioners. This led to the establishment of the multi-organization task force (MOTF), which issued reports in 1997 and 2000, and to a series of changes to the Model Law by NCEES. See [http://www.asprs.org/asprs/news/NCEES\\_frame.html](http://www.asprs.org/asprs/news/NCEES_frame.html) for the task force reports and other numerous resource and background materials on this issue.

## **Policy**

The policy of ASPRS on the issue of licensing of photogrammetrists and GIS professionals, developed in accordance with goals set forth in the ASPRS Strategic Plan, is summarized as follows:

- ASPRS supports the licensing of photogrammetrists and selected GIS professionals<sup>1</sup>, provided it is accomplished in a fair and reasonable manner.<sup>2</sup>
- ASPRS endorses adoption of the NCEES Model Law in any jurisdiction where licensing is considered as a requirement for the practice of photogrammetry and/or GIS.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Those practicing in areas defined as "inclusions" in the MOTF reports and NCEES Model Law

<sup>2</sup> 1997 Multi-Organizational Summit Meeting

<sup>3</sup> ASPRS Strategic Plan

- ASPRS engages in constructive dialogue with the broader surveying and mapping community, representing the interests of the ASPRS members and promulgating this Policy on issues related to licensing and its jurisdiction-specific implementation.<sup>4</sup>
- ASPRS provides expert advice to state licensing boards related to standards, examinations, and the interpretation of specific legislative language referring to the practice of photogrammetry and GIS.<sup>5</sup>
- In support of jurisdiction- or NCEES-developed examinations on photogrammetric or GIS practice, ASPRS may release Certification Program examination items in a controlled manner so as not to compromise the security of the ASPRS Certification examination.<sup>6</sup>
- Any representative of ASPRS, including Regions and Chapters, involved in dialogue with other parties concerning the jurisdiction-specific implementation of the Model Law or derivatives thereof are expected to promote and support ASPRS policy and implementation as set forth herein.<sup>7</sup>
- The primary spokesperson on licensure issues at the jurisdiction (state) level will normally be a Region representative, assisted by the ASPRS Professional Practice Division (PPD), the ASPRS Multi-Organizational Task Force Representatives, the NCEES Participating Organizations Liaison Council (POLC) Representative, and headquarters personnel. Region spokesperson(s) will endorse established ASPRS policy and positions as described above. New or proposed variations of position or policy must be approved through ASPRS leadership, according to the process described by this document.<sup>8</sup>
- An organizational infrastructure, depicted in the attached chart, will be maintained by ASPRS to ensure a consensus approach to policy and procedure maintenance and to ensure effective communication at all levels of ASPRS governance.

## **Procedures**

1. The Model Law for Surveying is maintained and promulgated by NCEES to all member engineering and surveying licensing boards in the legal jurisdictions (U.S. states and territories)<sup>9</sup>. The Model Law for Surveying contains a description of the “ideal” (or at least the consensus ideal) model for licensure of photogrammetrists and GIS professionals. NCEES has recognized the Multi-Organizational Task Force as a primary source of input from the surveying and mapping profession, including photogrammetrists and GIS professionals, on matters pertaining to the Model Law. The function of the Multi-Organizational Task Force (MOTF) is to establish consensus positions on matters related to the licensing of photogrammetrists and GIS professionals, bring related issues and concerns to the attention of NCEES, and to consult with NCEES on any further modifications or revisions to the Model Law that may be proposed in the future. The point of contact within ASPRS for issues and concerns relating to the NCEES Model

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<sup>4</sup> 1997 Multi-Organizational Summit Meeting

<sup>5</sup> 1997, 2000 Multi-Organizational Task Force Reports

<sup>6</sup> NCEES POLC Annual Reports, ASPRS Certification Committee Meeting Minutes

<sup>7</sup> Excom and Board of Directors Meeting Minutes, ASPRS Bylaws

<sup>8</sup> Excom and Board of Directors Meeting Minutes

<sup>9</sup> See [http://www.ncees.org/modelaw/pdf/model\\_law\\_2001\\_web.pdf](http://www.ncees.org/modelaw/pdf/model_law_2001_web.pdf) for current (2001) language.

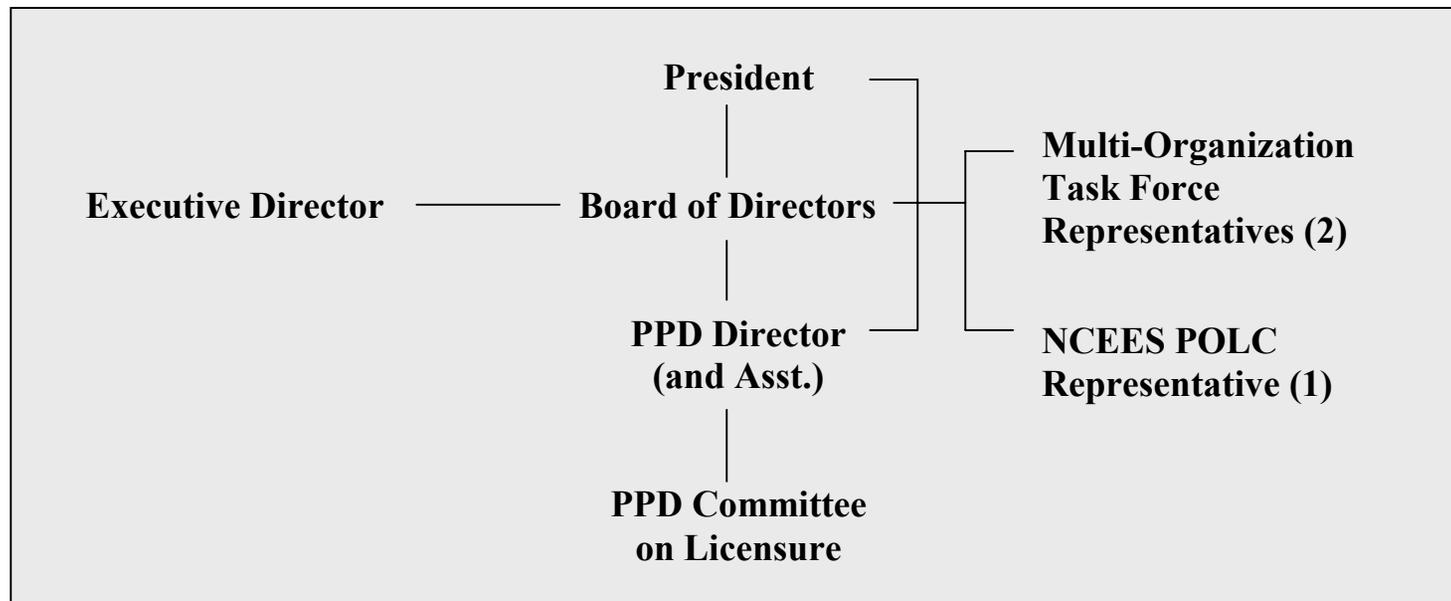
Law are the two (2) ASPRS Representatives to the MOTF. These Representatives are appointed by the ASPRS President.

2. Guidelines and recommendations for the implementation of the Model Law for Surveying are also promulgated by NCEES. Such materials include, but are not limited to, professional standards of practice, examination materials and procedures, and policies on comity and mobility. The Professional Organization Liaison Council (POLC) advises NCEES on these and related matters. ASPRS was granted membership to the POLC in 1998. ASPRS representation is provided to NCEES POLC through the one (1) ASPRS Representative, appointed by the ASPRS President. The ASPRS POLC Representative attends the annual POLC meeting, as well as the annual NCEES meeting. The ASPRS Executive Director may serve as an alternate representative to these meetings in the absence of the ASPRS POLC Representative.
3. The ASPRS Professional Practice Division (PPD) reports to the ASPRS Board of Directors on all matters pertaining to licensure of photogrammetrists and GIS professionals. The MOTF Representatives and the NCEES POLC Representative report their activities to the PPD Director before each ASPRS Board Meeting (at a minimum) and in between Board Meetings as appropriate. The PPD Director is responsible for reporting MOTF activities and NCEES POLC activities to the ASPRS Board.
4. A Committee on Professional Licensure was established under PPD at the 2002 ASPRS Annual Meeting. This committee serves as a liaison to the ASPRS membership on matters of professional licensure. Committee activities will include, but are not limited to: facilitation of communication of information to the membership at large in a timely manner; cataloging and archiving inquiries from the membership at large; referral of matters requiring policy review, clarification or action by the ASPRS body of governance for licensure policy described above in this document; and maintenance of an up-to-date record of licensure activities in all of the legal jurisdictions represented within the ASPRS membership. The PPD Director appoints the Chair of the Committee on Professional Licensure. The Committee Chair submits written reports to the PPD Director before each PPD Division Meeting (at a minimum) and in between Division Meetings as appropriate.
5. Regions and Chapters should report regularly through their National Director to society leadership about photogrammetric and GIS licensure activities under consideration or occurring in their local jurisdictions. Specifically, National Directors should submit regular reports of relevant activity to the PPD Committee on Professional Licensure. The Regions and Chapters are responsible for establishing and maintaining sufficient and appropriate communication infrastructure to ensure that their National Director is informed regarding all local and regional matters pertaining to licensure. The PPD Committee will archive these reports for the permanent record, and will summarize all submitted information on a regular basis for the PPD Director. The PPD Director is responsible for reporting summarized regional activities to the ASPRS Board.
6. It is recognized that events may evolve quickly at the local or regional level, and that it may not be possible to wait for a PPD meeting or a Board Meeting to complete a thorough review and recommend an appropriate course of action in every situation requiring ASPRS attention. For this reason, PPD Committee reports to the PPD Director, as described in 5 above, are copied to the Executive Director. In situations requiring immediate consideration and/or action, the Executive Director and PPD Director will

consult with the appropriate National Director, local licensing committee chair, and other members of the body of governance for licensure policy as appropriate. The Executive Director will serve as a liaison to any other professional organizations, such as ACSM, MAPPS and others, that be involved. All such directions and guidance from the Executive Director and PPD Director will be copied to the PPD Committee on Licensure for cataloging and inclusion in subsequent reports.

7. Regions and Chapters are the preferred point of contact for local jurisdictions beginning to consider changes to their licensing statutes or regulations that affect photogrammetric practice. However, every situation is unique and ASPRS headquarters may learn of activity within a jurisdiction before the Region or Chapter learns of it. In all such cases, the Executive Director will inform the appropriate National Director, copying the PPD Director, the Multi-Organizational Task Forces Representatives and the NCEES POLC Representative. The PPD Director will inform the PPD Committee on Licensure, and it becomes that Committee's responsibility to add this information to its catalog of jurisdictional activities. The National Director is responsible for informing the Region or Chapter leadership and any other local committees as may exist.
8. On all matters requiring the development of new or modified policy or a new statement of position from ASPRS to the local jurisdiction or local ASPRS membership, a response will be drafted by the ASPRS body of governance for licensure policy, in cooperation with the appropriate National Director, designated Region representatives and local committees members. No position statements will be submitted or presented to any external body under the name of ASPRS unless this body of governance has approved them. The Executive Director and headquarters support staff may facilitate the drafting of modifications of policy, revised legislative language, position statements, etc. through email and/or teleconference. Should the ASPRS President determine that a particular matter requires a vote of the Board of Directors, the Executive Director may conduct this vote through email as an open ballot.
9. Where more than one region is involved with a particular jurisdiction, all affected National Directors will be notified, following the procedures set forth above. Affected regions will coordinate a single, unified representation to the jurisdiction. This may involve establishment of a joint committee, or one region may accede such responsibilities to the other(s).
10. Requests from the jurisdiction(s) to ASPRS headquarters for support on licensing implementation matters, such as the drafting of minimum standards of practice or availability of examination questions from the ASPRS Certification Examination question bank, will be brought to the attention of the appropriate National Director, the PPD Director, the MOTF Representatives and the NCEES POLC Representatives in a timely manner. However, depending on the sensitivity of the request, such as for specific examination items, detailed information may not be released. In such cases, the Executive Director will note the need for this restriction in his report to the individuals described above. In the case of examination-related matters, the Executive Director works directly with the Examinations Committee to fulfill requests from the jurisdictions or from NCEES.

**Governance  
Body re:  
Licensing  
Policy**



**Local and  
Regional  
Representation  
On Licensing  
Matters**

