

# ANSLS Standards of Practice – Part 9: Project File



- 9.1 Each survey shall have a supporting file kept by the member or survey firm, containing:
  - 9.1.1 field notes including electronic data
  - 9.1.2 a record of all searches made for evidence (physical, documentary or verbal) and the results of such searches;
  - 9.1.3 references to photographic material, old plans, old conveyances and other material used for information;
  - 9.1.4 all pertinent computations;
  - 9.1.5 the survey contract or client's instructions; and
  - 9.1.6 a copy of any plans, descriptions and reports prepared as a result of the survey.
- 9.2 All original field notes plans and supporting files shall belong to the member or survey firm whose responsibility it shall be for their safekeeping.
- 9.3 All plans or a reproducible copy of same shall be retained by the member or survey firm
- 9.4 When a member or survey firm ceases to do business in the Province, notice shall be filed with the Executive Director of the Association advising of the address where the project files owned by the member or survey firm will be kept.
- 9.5 A member or survey firm ceasing the practice of land surveying may request the Association to accept project files for safekeeping.
- 9.6 A plan may be accompanied by a report, signed and dated by the member.

# What Type of File do we keep?

- Hard Copy Files
- Digital Files
- Combination of Both

# What about converting Hard Copy Files to Digital ?

- This is where we require a written standard.
- Many would like to purge large hard copy files and retain only the scanned version.
- Must be done properly to ensure the new digital document will hold the same integrity as the original (and offer the same protection to the public in the event of any future claims).
- We need to establish a process that will allow us to convert to digital. Digital version will become the authoritative document and the hard copy does not have to be retained.

# Digital File Standards

- Will require Legal Consultation to help establish standard.
- If court case arises, must be able to fully explain the conversion process (when was it converted, what was the process, who was involved, how did you ensure it was not tampered with since the conversion, etc.)
- Existing Federal Legislation already in place:

“Personal Information Protection and Electronic Documents Act”

<https://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/ENG/ACTS/P-8.6/index.html>

- Other associations and other industries already have standards in place to convert from paper to digital (Quebec).

# SGB example

- Surveyor General Branch held all CLS hard copy originals in vault.
- Established and Implemented process to scan all hard copy plans, and only retain the scanned version as the authoritative digital document. Essentially transfer the legal value of the hard copy document onto the digital version.
- Entrust secure digital signature (MyKey).
- Documented log of: technical specifications used, who scanned the document, on what date, who did the QC, etc.

# Standard

- File Type: JPEG, BMP, PDF, etc. ?  
PDF/A is ISO standard for long-term preservation.
- Colour scan or greyscale?  
larger file, but more detail/clarity
- 300 DPI ?

# What about digital storage?

- How will you ensure your file is being safely stored/protected. Do we require a standard on this?
- Should the Association host the storage and backup of digital files (through a 3<sup>rd</sup> party provider) to ensure consistency and future access.
- What about permissions/access to the digital documents if the member is no longer practicing or deceased.

- 9.5 A member or survey firm ceasing the practice of land surveying may request the Association to accept project files for safekeeping.
  - Is this currently possible?
  - Preference would be to accept digital files.
  - Currently no standard in place to convert to digital.

# Field Notes

- Should we allow fully digital field notes? (if so, standards will need to be amended).
- If not, we can either create as hard copy (paper) and follow the same standard to convert to digital, or simply retain the original.