



# TASMAP

## Topographic Mapping

### *Consultation Summary and Final Recommendations*

May 2015

# Introduction

**TASMAP** is the Tasmanian Government's base mapping service, with a long history of producing high quality mapping products, including a wide range of topographic series, national park and tourist maps, street atlas and other mapping products.

**TASMAP** is managed by *Land Tasmania*, a Division of the Department of Primary Industries, Parks, Water and Environment (DPIPWE).

**In April 2015, TASMAP published its [Future Directions](#) document which outlined proposed strategies for modernising its mapping products to meet projected client needs over the next decade.**

To gauge acceptance, **TASMAP** consulted with the public, stakeholders and clients and sought feedback on the proposals outlined in the *Future Directions* document. The document and supporting information was available on the **TASMAP** website with an email address for comments and submissions. The consultation period ran for six weeks and closed 22 May 2015.

# Consultation Summary

This is an exciting time for Tasmanian map users with the *Future Directions* process proving an excellent tool for gauging stakeholder opinion and acceptance of proposed recommendations. On conclusion of the review, all feedback was collated to inform the development of these recommendations. Overwhelmingly, user feedback was complimentary towards the new directions and acceptance was very encouraging. The consultation enabled users to express their opinions on a range of matters from digital products, preferred mapping scales, currency of data and potential uses of the products. The main findings, in brief:

- Increased demand for digital mapping with reduced reliance on hard-copy maps.
- Many forms of mobile devices are now commonly used for map viewing.
- Praise for the digital products at minimal cost and for continuation across all series.
- Currency and accuracy is paramount for new products, with an emphasis on data collection and maintenance.
- 1:50 000 mapping scale is well supported as a Tasmanian base mapping series.
- Print on demand is a future development that should be investigated.

As a result of the consultation, this paper concludes that all recommendations outlined in the *Future Directions* document should go ahead. In addition, the final recommendations include an investigation in to the development of print on demand services.

## Feedback

### **A compilation of the written feedback:**

- Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the proposed new direction for mapping. I agree that we should be identifying the best way to provide map information to the public and to make that available for a multitude of platforms. My thoughts are that the prevalence of electronic devices will only increase in the future and the future of paper copies is limited. At this time there is some take up for hard copy as people still need to be able to navigate when the electricity runs out. However the advances being currently made will soon make this a non-issue. The best thing we have done recently is to make our 1:25k maps available as a digital product at a minimal cost to the user. I endorse the continuation of this process across all of the TASMAP products.
- One important issue, as far as I can ascertain, is the currency and accuracy of data. A new map is no use if the data it is based on is 10 years or more old. Users will no longer accept out of date information and will quickly reject even a new map series if the data presented is not current. A couple of years is bearable to most but in our dynamic changing environment the imperative is for information to be as up to date as possible. It is therefore imperative that the ability to obtain/capture new data and update the underlying databases be appropriately resourced to ensure relevancy of products that can adequately service the community and government's needs.
- Just some quick feedback on the direction paper that has been put out by TASMAP. As an Outdoor Education teacher I fully support the concept of 1:50 000 scale maps being made more easily available and particularly if designed at A3 size (and if TASMAP are printing them then on water resistant/Never Tear paper). These days we use digital maps a lot when teaching students and admittedly our favourite tool is Memory-Map. This is because it is so easy to use on mobile devices such as iPads and iPhones and because you can cache the entire state at 1:25k on these devices and it will show you current position etc. very easily. Unfortunately many of the 1:25k maps Memory-Map provide through their Tasmania product are significantly out of date. In talking with them they say that TASMAP has not made the more recent versions available to them. We would love to see platforms other than simply the LIST offering the latest up-to-date TASMAP products. From what I read of the direction paper it appears to me that TASMAP is heading in the right direction.

## TASMAP TOPOGRAPHIC MAPPING

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- I agree with all of the suggested proposals in the published Future Direction plan. The provision of maps in digital format is particularly welcome and a much-needed product in today's highly technological, interconnected world. I also look forward to using the new 1:50 000 scale maps in future bushwalks of Tasmania's South West.
- I have just read through your document. Essentially you have come to the same conclusion that other states did and are proposing something similar. While I love hard copy maps the reality is they only sell in small numbers while users keep wanting up-to-date maps. In Victoria they still print hard-copy, but on demand only and they are printed on a large ink-jet plotter (maybe that's an idea for you). Quality is not quite as good as the old offset printing but then they are more up-to-date and it seems most who still need hard copy have come to accept them. The proposal for a \$2 fee for each 25k map is excellent. It is low enough that most will simply purchase copies rather than seek a free copy from a friend. I hope it works out that way. 1:50 000 maps are ideal for most bushwalking, they are now the standard maps in Victoria's Alps and for much of Tasmania they will also work very well. Yes, you sometimes need a magnifier to read fine detail, but most carry a compass with a magnifier or a Fresnel Lens, so that's easily solved. I can understand the need to cut costs and at the same time deliver more up-to-date maps. So I agree with all the main points and hope the ministers, etc. allow you to put the document into practice.
- During my early bushwalking and kayaking experiences (seventies and eighties) we used 1:100 000 topo maps exclusively, it's all we had. The introduction of 1:25 000 topo series provided users with a quantum leap in the amount of available detail, but for extended trips, an onerous quantity of hard copy maps. There has always been a need for a compromise between the two scales and their individual benefits, the new 1:50 000 topo series is the obvious fit. Initially I thought the change of contour interval to 20 meters was a retrograde step, but in hindsight when you scrutinize the 1:25 000 over mountainous areas of the state the 10 metre contour lines tend to swamp the other detail. Although I haven't used 1:50 000 in the field as yet, I consider that the introduction of this series will be of great benefit to the outdoor community. Also as most bushwalking parties are now equipped with both hard copy maps and hand held GPS devices, the availability of cheap digital 1:25 000 topo maps will encourage the use of this medium to proliferate.
- I read through your plan document, it all looks good and like a smart way to move forward. One thing that stood out to me, is that if you guys are producing 250K data and map, and we also produce 250K data and maps maybe there is opportunity to work collaboratively between GA and DPIPWE to make that more efficient and beneficial to both.
- This is a really good piece of work and useful for a lot of other stakeholders on the mainland! Are we able to use some of these findings in the ICSM community and more broadly in ANZLIC's Foundation Spatial Data Framework?

- Thanks for opportunity to add to this process. I have come to it late so I haven't been able to absorb the implications of the new 1:50000 series well. They may be really good and of course the addition of digital versions is going to be very useful. However most digital mapping that I'm aware of (GPS and LISTmap etc.) suffers from displaying only very small distances in detail and thus the larger frames of reference cannot be seen together or at least not without much scrolling and zooming which I find very unsatisfactory. I have spent many hours poring over particularly 1:100 000 scale maps and expect to continue to do so. I fear that the ability to do this will be lost or at least will recede into a historical view as they are not updated. Of course as a walker with an interest in landscape, it is the geographical features I'm most interested in and these don't change so much. Well, actually, in the case of 1:25 000 series, forestry operations and the location of "bush" roads do change things quite a bit and this is often the case where 1:25 000 series maps are often well out of date anyway. I don't quite get the difference between the new digital versions of 1:100 000/1:25 000 maps and the PDF archives. Presumably the digital maps could be updated and with the right resolution could be printed to their original size for the old "paper" uses. I understand the rationale of lack of sales but special printing services, e.g. Officeworks, are available to get around that problem.
- Thank you for an opportunity to comment on the document "TASMAP Topographic mapping – Future directions." Overall the SSSI Tasmanian Regional Committee endorses the document and is pleased to see that TASMAP is forward looking and addressing the current and future needs and uses of topographic mapping data. The document provides great insight into the challenges of providing current and fit for purpose state-wide mapping. There is one area that the SSSI Tasmanian Regional Committee would like to see explored a little further, this is provision of hard copy maps. The current proposal involves a multi-stage process. We would prefer that the path to partnership with professional printing outlets be fleshed out to the point that a professional printing outlet could offer the full TASMAP catalogue for print on demand. For single sheets at A2 this would likely cost \$15.00 including \$2.50 to TASMAP. For this to work efficiently a new index based on "standard" A2 or A1 tiles would need to be developed. Your work to date is to be applauded.

### **Other Correspondence:**

Two phone calls were received and a face to face meeting held with members of local bush walking clubs.

In these conversations, the main concerns included the apparent lack of paper maps for some areas where the 1:25 000 series were currently out of stock. These concerns were somewhat abated when discussion highlighted the trial 1:50 000 series maps; the availability of the complete 1:25 000 series as digital products; and the progress towards print ready products, allowing users to print desired maps on demand. All members were pleased with the recommendations contained in the *Future Directions* and indicated their support.

# Conclusion

Overall, the *Future Directions* document was widely regarded as an excellent way forward for **TASMAP** and **Land Tasmania**.

The public consultation process provided support and evidence that the recommended **TASMAP** products will remain valid and valuable to **Land Tasmania** clients and LIST users now and into the future.

# Final Recommendations

It is recommended that **TASMAP**:

1. introduces a new 1:50 000 topographic map series;
2. introduces a new 1:50 000 *Tasmanian Map Book* series;
3. introduces digital versions of the base series maps: 1:25 000, 1: 50 000, 1: 100 000 and 1: 250 000;
4. archives the present version of the 1:25 000 and 1:100 000 map series, with no further revision;
5. continues to maintain and produce the 1:250 000 series, National Park, tourism and recreational maps, and the *Tasmanian Towns Street Atlas*; and
6. investigates print on demand services to gauge feasibility and demand.