



Cambridge
Conference

www.cambridgeconference2003.com

Ordnance Survey
Romsey Road
SOUTHAMPTON
SO16 4GU
United Kingdom

National Mapping Organisations as learning organisations

M-J Kraak
ITC
Netherlands

M Molenaar
ITC
Netherlands

Paper 4B.1

National Mapping Organisations as learning organisations

M-J Kraak and M Molenaar
ITC
Netherlands

Why should NMO learn?

Assuming the task of an NMO is to ensure the timely availability of up-to-date framework data of national scope, according to nationally accepted data standards, and standards of integrity, formats, etc. it will be obvious that NMOs should have the capacity to cope with the processes to fulfil these tasks. However, since we live in a world of change the NMOs should have the capability to react to new technological and societal developments, which asks for a flexibly eager workforce that is willing to learn. An NMO environment should stimulate this.

What should NMOs learn?

The NMO task encompasses the provision and maintenance of framework data, which includes a spatial reference systems, digital elevation models, fundamental topography, administrative boundaries, and official geographic names. From these domain perspectives NMOs should be aware of individual technologies in data acquisition, data and systems management, and visualisation. Additionally they should consider integration of these technologies into optimal workflow processes with a concentration on the production of framework data. However, besides process the NMOs should not neglect the context in which the developments should be seen. Here they should consider the user in a geospatial data infrastructure environment who requires methods and techniques (tools) to access the data at an affordable cost. This includes a flexible approach to their products to cope with demands that will range from small stand alone applications to large institutional applications with continuity or one time project oriented applications.

How should NMOs learn?

The learning environment of the NMOs should offer the proper education at the individual level to make sure the professionals are equipped for their tasks ahead, while this should lead to an overall capacity building that simultaneously shakes up the organisation.

NMO should aim to strengthen their organisation so that it can assume responsibility for designing, managing and sustaining development. For this, not only are thematic professionals, such as the geoinformation specialists, required, but also staff that can formulate, design, manage and negotiate with other organisations and central government in order to address organisational and institutional issues in support of the acceptance of technological solutions. Hence capacity building comprises human resources development, organisational strengthening and institutional strengthening of which education is part and parcel.

When should NMOs learn?

Since the NMOs should constantly wonder if the current products are still in demand, if their current staff are still capable to function at the right level, it is obvious learning is a permanent affair. Especially since NMOs should also look into the future and wonder what type of products are required in the short and long term, and what kind of staff capabilities are required to meet this future demand. NMOs therefore should be a learning organisation.