

AltaLIS

spatial data warehouse update

by Richard A. Schlachter, A.L.S.

This column is one of a series planned for sharing information with the ALSA membership on activities at SDW Ltd. & AltaLIS Ltd.

Spatial Data Warehouse Ltd. (SDW) is an organization which was formed in June 1996 when the Government of Alberta discontinued its traditional role of funding and managing Alberta's Provincial base mapping. SDW is a consortium consisting of some companies within the ATCO Group (formerly Alberta Power Limited, Canadian Western Natural Gas Company Limited, Northwestern Utilities Limited), TELUS Advanced Communications Inc., TransAlta Corporation and the Government of Alberta.

AltaLIS Ltd. (AltaLIS) is the agent selected by Spatial Data Warehouse Ltd. through an RFP process, and is responsible for the updating, re-engineering, storage, distribution, marketing and general management of the Province's primary mapping data sets. AltaLIS is a joint venture of QC Data Ltd. and Martin Newby Consulting Ltd., for the purpose of making Alberta's base mapping infrastructure more available, accessible, accurate and affordable.

One of the first objectives of AltaLIS was to re-engineer and reduce the costs associated with maintaining the cadastral datasets (Parcel and Misam). Much of this work is complete and a 50% reduction in costs is expected over

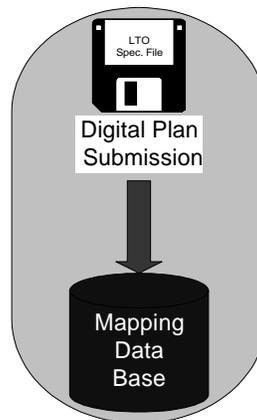
time, reducing the cadastral updating costs from \$200 to approximately \$100 per plan.

AltaLIS and SDW are currently finalizing a joint venture agreement that will initiate a longer-term commitment to further re-engineering and investment in the digital basemap product line.

Cadastral Mapping Project

Most surveyors are now aware of the requirement for plans of survey to be submitted to Registries in digital format. Since June 1, 1999, it has been necessary to submit the following information:

- a survey plan in hardcopy (mylar) format;
- a CAD file, in AutoCAD, MicroStation or DXF format (according to the LTO layer structure);
- a plot file (.plt) of the CAD file; and,
- a text file (.txt) of meta data produced by the DiPS program.



Registries received approximately 700 plans in digital format in the months of June and July. There has also been a record number of total survey plans registered in 1998 and 1999. Traditionally, there had been about 7,200 plans registered yearly; in 1998, 10,300 plans were registered – an increase of 43%. In the first seven months of this year, over 7,000 plans have been registered. If this trend continues, approximately 12,000 plans will be registered in 1999.

This unexpected increase in registrations has generated a backlog in plans waiting to be integrated into the base maps. It was originally projected for the backlog to be cleared by November 1999 based on 1998 registration statistics; however, this date will be extended subject to the number actually registered in 1999. Once the backlog is eliminated, plans will be entered within 30 days of registration.

The quality of digital plan submissions has steadily improved since June 1st. The major issues or difficulties have been segregating the plan information according to the LTO layer structure. In addition, many “descriptive plans” have been submitted with incomplete information or have inconsistencies in *Lot* and *Block* layers. In response to these problems, the AltaLIS Help Desk phone line (403-294-1028) has dealt with many ALSA member questions. Alberta Registries has also released an updated FAQ bulletin mail-out and a website notice at.

Cadastral Mapping Fees

Since the introduction on April 1st of a \$100 fee for registration of digital plans of survey submitted to Alberta Registries - Land Titles Office, many questions have been posed regarding the use of these funds.

The redirection of cadastral mapping updating costs is a direct result of the government discontinuing its traditional funding of mapping activities. Through legislation, the Government of Alberta (GoA) has levied a \$100 fee at the time of survey plan registration, to be applied specifically to the cost of updating cadastral mapping (see figure 1). The fee is a *pass through cost to the party who in effect is causing the change to the cadastral map fabric with the registration of a new plan.*

Funds generated through this cost redirection are only applied to cadastral map updating. All other costs associated with re-engineering and operations are covered through a combination of SDW and AltaLIS financing along with revenues generated from the sale of licensed data. SDW's role (which includes the GoA) is to monitor performance, costs, and profit to ensure all contract agreement terms are met.

Future issues of this column will include developments in new products, licenses and pricing as AltaLIS continues to work closely with its clients and stakeholders.



Phone (403) 716-3490

Fax - (403) 716-3494

Email order@altalis.com

Web www.altalis.com

333 – 7th Avenue S.W.

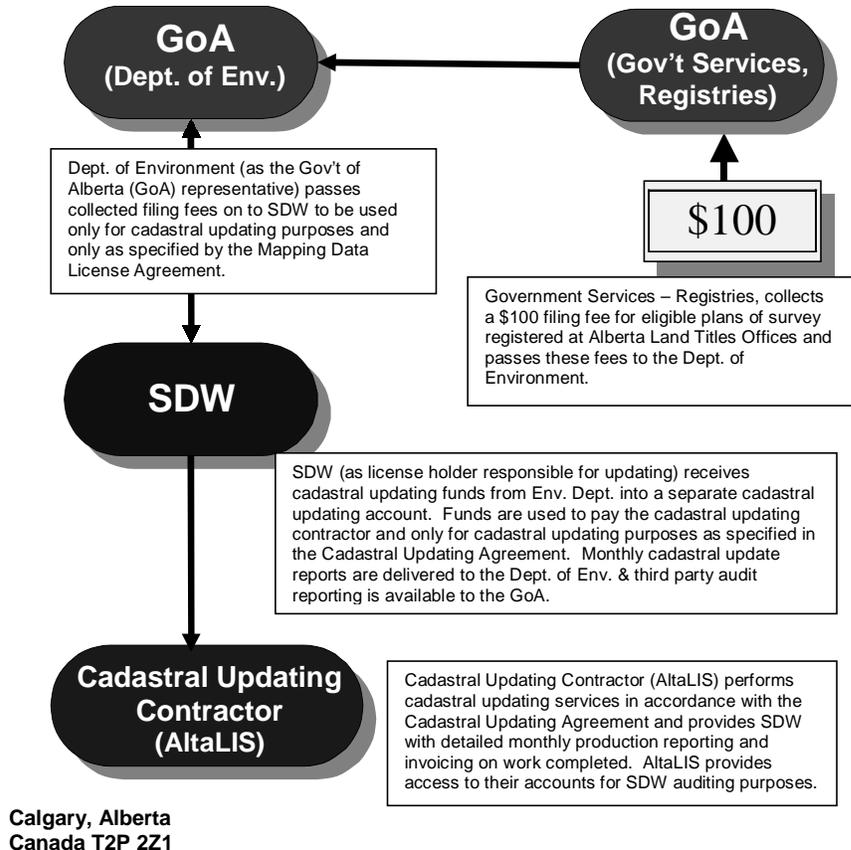


Figure 1 – Cadastral mapping fee flow for digital plan submissions