

What the introduction of the *Place Names Act 2020* means for Council

January 2023

LandTasmania

Introduction of the *Place Names Act 2020*

The new legislation in relation to the naming of places came into effect on the 1st of July 2020. This saw a raft of changes introduced as the Nomenclature Board was replaced with the Place Names Advisory Panel, a new Registrar of Place Names was appointed and a new process for place naming rolled out. This document summarises and outlines some of the major changes that will benefit Councils and a copy of the *Place Names Act 2020* can be accessed [here](https://nre.tas.gov.au/land-tasmania/place-naming-in-tasmania/guidelines-and-processes).

As always information on place naming in Tasmania can be located on the NRE Tas webpage at:

<https://nre.tas.gov.au/land-tasmania/place-naming-in-tasmania>

Naming Roads and Streets:

One of the main goals for the introduction of the new Act was the streamlining of the naming of roads and streets, to overcome the challenges this provided in the past. The *Place Names Act 2020* makes road and street naming the responsibility of the Council of the municipal area where the feature is located.

Some Councils will notice no change to road and street naming, but others who were previously required to propose names to the Nomenclature Board that were outside a proclaimed city or town will notice timely efficiencies. The *Place Names Act 2020* enables Council as the responsible authority to propose names through *Placenames Tasmania* and as long as the name adheres to the Tasmanian Place Naming Guidelines it will be accepted by the Registrar of Place Names and approved from that point.

A road or street may be referred to the Place Names Advisory Panel if the Registrar deems that it does not adhere to the Guidelines and in such a case will follow the Panel workflow defined below to which the Panel will make a recommendation to the Minister for Parks (The Minister) for approval.

Tasmanian Place Naming Guidelines:

The Guidelines approved by The Minister went live on the 1st July 2020 and are available from the NRE Tas website at:

<https://nre.tas.gov.au/land-tasmania/place-naming-in-tasmania/guidelines-and-processes>

Register of Place Names:

Placenames Tasmania continues to be the register of place names for Tasmania. All road and street naming proposals are made through *Placenames Tasmania* and include any historical and/or origin information available and if possible, include the Council Minute and a copy of the subdivision/development plan. *Placenames Tasmania* enables searching of Tasmanian place names to ensure duplications and similarities for proposed names are avoided. *Placenames Tasmania* includes a web map viewer to show the extents of each place name and LISTmap can also be utilised to view extents. <https://www.placenames.tas.gov.au/>

Registrar of Place Names:

Victoria Zawko is appointed by the Secretary of the Department as the Registrar of Place Names. I am sure many of you have already had dealings with Victoria and have found that she is very competent, knowledgeable and helpful.

Place Names Advisory Panel:

After over 65 years of existence, the Nomenclature Board had its final meeting in June 2020, ending a huge undertaking of formalising the naming of the majority of places in Tasmania. The Place Names Advisory Panel continues the Board's work and has a contemporary makeup to be more inclusive of those organisations involved in naming today and enabling more community engagement. Michael Giudici remains the Chair of the Panel transitioning from the Chair of the Board and I also retain my State Government Spatial Data and Mapping role. The Panel includes a Parks & Wildlife Service representative, one member from the outdoor recreation community and two community members with knowledge of history, orthography and linguistics. The final Panel member is a member from the Local Government Association Tasmania (LGAT) to ensure local government is represented and has a voice on the Panel.

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Place Naming (other than roads and streets):

When a place naming proposal that is not a road or street is accepted by the Registrar, it is accepted into *Placenames Tasmania* and advertised for public submissions for a period of at least one month. On conclusion of the advertising period, each proposal is submitted to the Panel, including any submissions received, for a recommendation. Upon completion of a meeting of the Panel, recommendations are forwarded to The Minister, where the recommendation may be approved or returned to the Panel for a subsequent recommendation.

Gazettal:

Unlike previously, where the gazettal was the form of communication and consultation, the new Act will only require the gazettal of decisions as a notification, which will occur annually in December each year. The consultation process now occurs prior to the Panel receiving a proposal to ensure that public submissions can be taken into account by the Panel. Road and Street names will not be gazetted unless referred to the Panel due to non-conformance with the Guidelines.

Aboriginal and Dual Naming:

The Aboriginal and Dual Naming Policy (ADNP) provides for the naming of areas that have significance to Tasmania's Aboriginal history. The policy provides for the preferential assignment of Aboriginal names for previously unnamed natural features or places - such as rivers and mountains - as well as allowing for the addition of Aboriginal names to existing official names of natural features or places. The Panel has established an Aboriginal and Dual Naming Reference Group of experts in Aboriginal languages to provide advice to the Panel. For information on Aboriginal naming see:

<https://nre.tas.gov.au/land-tasmania/place-naming-in-tasmania/aboriginal-and-dual-naming>

Misrepresentation of a Place Name:

The *Place Names Act 2020* includes provisions to deter the misrepresentation of an approved place name through the usage of another approved name or name that is not approved. The Act outlines a graduated approach to manage such issues, including penalty provisions.

The misrepresentation of a property and its approved locality is one occurrence where the new provisions may apply. The Place Names Office have been made aware of property developers advertising properties as being in one locality when in fact they are within another, possibly due to perceptions of a more desirable locality. The Act allows action to be taken on such matters.

Should you have any questions on these or any other aspects of the changes please email the Place Names Office via Placenames@nre.tas.gov.au

Regards

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