

Mapping Ireland – The End and Yet the Beginning

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SUMMARY

Ordnance Survey Ireland (OSi), the national mapping agency of Ireland, will in early 2005 complete the creation of large-scales vector mapping coverage for the State. This process, begun in 1824 and moving to digital mapping in the 1970s, has included resurvey by photogrammetric methods of the suburban and rural areas of the country, providing an accurate and high-specification spatial dataset. The work has been completed by OSi staff and by contractors on two continents. The paper:

- Describes the programme and its results
- Analyses the lessons learned in implementing the work in technical, financial and organisational terms, including the issues of
 - In-house versus contract
 - Setting priorities
 - The balance between quality, cost and timeliness
 - Educating and yet being guided by customers
 - Preparing for the next chapter whilst not losing focus on the current one
- Reviews the importance of the vector data in the development of an Irish SDI. (The ISDI project is currently at a formative stage, with a Government decision that it should be implemented, and an inter-Departmental Group currently developing a draft policy)
- Overviews the next stages in developing the topographic data to meeting ongoing national and customer requirements, not least in building an SDI, including
 - Ongoing specification/ quality development
 - Developing data models
 - Implementing systems which enable the developments
 - Continuing to meet developing customer needs

In completing the work described, linked to the implementation of a new coordinate reference system compatible with GPS along with the related physical infrastructure, Ireland has created a high quality topographic base and is able to draw conclusions that will be great relevance to other countries in both the developed and the developing world.