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Daniel Williams  
Chairperson  
Survey and Spatial New Zealand Board

Dear Daniel

### **2019-20 COUNCIL EXPECTATIONS FOR THE S+SNZ BOARD**

I am writing on behalf of the S+SNZ (NZIS Inc) Council to set out our expectations in accordance with the Rules. As the Rules of S+SNZ were changed in November 2018 and the business plan and strategy have been previously approved, this letter provides the strategic direction and annual priorities for the remainder of this year to guide Board decisions and through until the end of the 2019/20 financial year.

The Council is committed to a vibrant surveying and spatial sector. It does so in the belief that success in the sector is foundational to the success of NZ Inc.

We recognise that collectively we are on a transformational journey to respond to the changing demands of our members, and to ensure that our organisation has the capability to support our members, in turn, to respond to the changing needs of our communities. We also recognise that in promoting our organisation as a home for the spatial profession, we need to develop an understanding of the unique demands of spatial members. As a not-for-profit organisation with voluntary membership, we recognise that there are risks with change, or not changing, and we will continue to engage with the Board especially on maintaining relevance, making an impact on the things that matter to NZ, and creating value for our members.

#### **Strategic context**

Our members are presented with a wealth of opportunity to apply their knowledge, skills, and experience. As an organisation, we want to make a difference where it counts. This creates a challenge to mobilise our members with a sense of common purpose, to focus on the things that matter the most to our communities and to prioritise, so we make a real and positive impact. We are too small to go it alone and so must collaborate and partner. We must understand our place in broader systems in which there are multiple participants. And most importantly, we must play our part in solving the big problems or capitalising on the big emerging opportunities in order to be relevant.

The Council is committed to diversity amongst our members and behaving inclusively. We believe that through diversity, we will strengthen our leadership, and find new people to collaborate with

and new solutions. We strongly encourage driving for diversity and encouraging inclusiveness throughout the business of S+SNZ. It is understood that this is a journey which will take some time and capability must be built for risks to be appropriately managed, especially amongst our leaders.

### **Specific expectations**

We expect that your prioritisation decisions will favour those projects and initiatives that will have the most impact in the following priority areas:

#### *Support the Spatial Strategy*

Without specific focus on advancing spatial understanding and the spatial value proposition in Survey and Spatial NZ, we will struggle to grow the number of spatial members. A culture change needs to be driven within our organisation in order to create space for spatial, which profession in its own right, not simply a capability within Survey and Spatial NZ. We will continue to make little progress unless we can demonstrate that we view spatial as a profession rather than a bolt-on stream, that we are willing to make space within the organisation and therefore that our offer to provide spatial professionals a home is a genuine one.

It should be recognised that the spatial profession is relatively new in comparison to surveying and it is evolving rapidly due to it being largely technology-based, therefore it requires a different approach to encouraging membership.

#### *Review and simplify governance arrangements*

We acknowledge that the organisation has a complex governance structure which in part reflects historic organisational structure, in part transitional arrangements resulting from the constitutional review in 2013, and in part a desired future state. We do not intend to embark on further constitutional reform but do expect the Board to progressively review implementation of the current governance arrangements to improve efficiency and effectiveness.

We note the Council has identified the same challenge in relation to its committees and policies. Membership participation and voluntary input is fundamentally important but, like the resourcing of National Office, resources are scarce, and we expect stewardship of those resources to be as effective as possible so that energy is focussed on our role in NZ society rather than internally-focussed 'keeping the engine running'.

#### *Focus on key advocacy issues*

As much as possible, Council wants Survey and Spatial NZ resources to be focused on two large, key issues relevant to society that will unite and galvanise our membership.

We see the built environment (including housing) and resilience as key issues where our contribution can make a difference, and that have the attention of central and local government, allied professions, and our communities.

Advocacy efforts should be focussed on nationally consistent frameworks, standards, and processes as they relate to surveying and spatial in the context of the built environment and resilience, with an emphasis (acknowledging the priorities of others) on advocating for NZVD2016 implementation, national standards for the capture of 'three waters' infrastructure, and open data.

### *Professional regulation for surveyors*

As a professional body we are in the regulatory business. Our mandate to function in this way only comes from society if we are solving its problems. We must collaborate with other regulators and contributors in the systems in which our members function and ensure that our interventions are working well with those of others. Good regulatory practice is expected of us and that includes being clear on the problems we are helping to solve, and monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of our interventions.

If we do this well, then we will continue to enjoy the right to self-regulate our members' behaviour free from government intervention, and our members will benefit from knowing that the interventions are efficient and effective. Experience shows that professionals that serve society in such a way receive rewards of freedom to operate, acceptance of fair and reasonable fees, and an elevated status and respect. It is of great value to perform this function well and we note the current plan to continue to focus on this area which we support.

Specifically, this year we wish to see significant progress towards: understanding the nature of the problem(s) in engineering design, construction and asset management as it relates to surveying and spatial that justify intervention; collaborating with other regulators and stakeholders; designing appropriate interventions if required, and; establishing a monitoring and evaluation framework to demonstrate the effectiveness of these interventions in engineering surveying over time.

In addition, we wish to see improvement in the professional examinations conducted under the existing arrangement with the Cadastral Surveyors Licencing Board.

One of the key tool sets available to us is education and professional development. We fully support efforts on delivering high quality professional development events instead of, or in support of 'hard' interventions such as competency testing and certification.

### **Generic expectations**

#### *Communication*

It is important that we have consistent and clear messaging, supported by an appropriately resourced marketing plan, so we can harness the energy of our members towards the areas of focus. The messages from Council, the Board, and National Office should all be consistent. A communications and engagement plan developed by National Office with input from the President and Board Chair would help to clarify who is communicating what, how and when. We support the continued development in digital communications, including improvements to our website.

Despite Council meeting only twice a year, we expect regular communication from the Board. While we need to recognise the separate functions and responsibilities, we encourage regular communication between the President, Chairperson, and Chief Executive.

#### *Strategic review*

The Council is focussed on implementing a strategy that will achieve our vision by making an impact where it matters the most. Council notes that progress has been made in many areas set out in the Strategic Plan 2015-2020. It is for the Board to determine its review cycle for the strategic plan and at this stage we expect that that will commence in 2019. However, we also expect that the Board will review the existing strategy this year in the context of this letter and adjust its plans accordingly.

### *Early notification of any material changes in financial forecast*

While S+SNZ is a not-for-profit, we do expect the Board to ensure there is a budget surplus or provide Council with timely advice of any risk to financial performance.

### *Working together*

We are a small organisation and it is critical to our success that we work together while respecting our differing roles. We value the collegial approach to date, and we look forward to a continuation of the 'no-surprises' and communicative approach to strategy and plan development, meaningful consultation with our members, and appropriate transparency.

We understand that it is not the Board's role to undertake the "work" associated with advocacy activities. In most cases, the responsibility for driving specific actions will sit with working groups comprising experts identified through the streams and/or divisions. We must however recognise that individuals within the Board or Council may at times play a key role (for example by facilitating introductions to stakeholders) but they will do so in their capacity as a member of Survey and Spatial NZ. We will be in a much better position to achieve significant things when we work as a team and have a clear understanding of the value that each of us can bring.

Once the Board has developed its Annual Plan, we expect to be formally updated on progress at quarterly intervals. Council has the opportunity to provide feedback at Board meetings via the President.

### *Prioritisation*

The Council understands that prioritisation is difficult and that it is important that the Board makes some hard decisions. We expect to work with you so that the expectations of members and stakeholders are met through clear and effective communication about why we are prioritising and the trade-offs we are making.

### **Annex**

Attached is the timeline for the annual planning process. The changes to the rules mean that this may not be achieved this year, but this can be replaced by a realignment and prioritisation review in the light of this letter.

Yours sincerely



Rebecca Strang  
**President**  
**Survey and Spatial New Zealand**