



PCGN Meeting Minutes, Monday 24th August 2015
Royal Geographical Society (RGS), London

Present

PCGN staff

Defence Geographic Centre (JFIG-DGC)

Hydrographic Office (UKHO)

Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO)

BBC Monitoring (BBCM)

Apologies for absence: Ordnance Survey (OS).

1. The Minutes of the 193rd meeting on 30th March 2015 were considered and it was pointed out that Cote d'Ivoire should have a lower-case 'd'. The action items arising were discussed. It was noted that current FCO advice remained to continue to depict the Hala'ib Triangle as is; discussions with relevant FCO departments on this depiction were ongoing. The Chair reiterated the invitation to Committee members to contribute to the upcoming 30th BGN/PCGN Conference. Defence Geographic Centre (JFIG-DGC) would present a paper on DGC's Gazetteer project. The action for members to inform PCGN of required updates to the ISO 3166-2 standard was discussed. The importance and use of these codes and PCGN's involvement in bringing the codes up-to-date were described.
2. PCGN reported on recent work undertaken. Policy work had been focused on preparation for the BGN/PCGN Conference, along with the preparation of information papers on administrative divisions for a number of countries. Other work included provision of advice and checking of briefing maps, many of which had been for DGC's map books. The importance of consistency of names on the maps included in these books was discussed and the good collaboration between JFIG-DGC and PCGN in this area was recorded. Names advice had also been provided for UKHO charts. On the international side, there was ongoing collaboration with ISO and NGA; PCGN had also hosted an NGA staff member for a week's toponymic exchange. Liaison visits had been made to JFIG-DGC and FCO and PCGN staff had briefed new JFIG-DGC staff and liaison officers. PCGN continued to participate in the Central Government Geography Interest Group (CGGIG) and to update and improve the PCGN website.
3. The upcoming BGN/PCGN Conference was discussed. Committee members were invited to attend the Conference and a draft schedule for the week was distributed. The agenda would include Romanisation systems, general principles of standardisation, country issues and technical matters. Ordnance Survey would provide a brief on UK place names.

4. FCO staff reported on recent developments: the Home Office had enquired about the existence of a list of countries recognised by the UK, and it was noted that in practice the GNI covered this. The appointment of a new Permanent Under Secretary was announced. An enquiry from DFID regarding boundaries data was described, for which FCO had contacted JFIG-DGC and had highlighted PCGN's role advising on names.
5. UKHO described a number of charts that had been banned in Turkey: although the offending names had been removed, this had not been done formally, so there had been no official notification of the change, and therefore the charts remained banned.
6. JFIG-DGC reported on a number of recent staff changes, including a new Head of the recently amalgamated Names and Boundaries Section. An MOD Gazetteer had been produced and was now available for assessment and testing. The Gazetteer combined the Geographic Names Database (GNDB), Geographic Names Information System (GNIS and Composite Gazetteer of Antarctica (CGA) and the intention was to add to this initial content in the future.
7. A JFIG-DGC product listing disputed international boundaries and defining how these should be depicted was described. PCGN would add notes on the depiction of names in relation to these disputes.
8. PCGN described the current PCGN policy for Burma; this was to use the names appearing on the English-language versions of Burmese official mapping, rather than romanising the parallel Burmese-script sources. However, the application of this policy had proven problematic as recent official mapping had proved extremely difficult to obtain, and certain discrepancies between mapping sources and the names included in the GNDB had been noted. As an interim solution, PCGN proposed using readily available mapping produced by the Myanmar Information Management Unit (MIMU) (a UN humanitarian organisation). MIMU had a clearly defined toponymic policy on their website, and were knowledgeable about the ground situation in Burma. Committee members were invited to comment on this proposal.
9. PCGN described BGN's proposed policy change to use the South Korean Ministry of Culture and Tourism (MOCT) romanisation system in place of the McCune-Reischauer system for North Korea. South Korea produced maps of North Korea using the MOCT system, and in the absence of any other recent mapping, BGN proposed to use these maps, and thus the MOCT system, for North Korea too. The relative merits were described in detail, though PCGN's preference was to retain the McCune-Reischauer system.
10. PCGN reported on the new administrative structure of Morocco, noting that it now comprised 12 regions. It was noted that some of the administrative centres (PPLAs) had compound names. These were the names of the prefectures, which combined the names of more than one city. It was recommended to simply show the cities of Tanger (Tangiers), Oujda and Agadir as the administrative centres on cartographic products.

11. A change in the administrative divisions of Mauritania was also reported, and a Toponymic Factfile on that country had been prepared.
12. The collaboration with an NGA Balkans names expert who had spent a week at PCGN was described. The exchange had included technical discussions on a number of matters relating to the Balkans, reviews of briefing maps and a day had been spent visiting JFIG-DGC.
13. It was reported that the next Central Government Geography Interest Group would take place on 24th September.
14. The Chair closed the meeting, thanking Members for their participation. The date of the next meeting would be arranged in due course.