



## Land Registration Act Amendments Update

Driven by operational requirements, suggestions from stakeholders, and detailed consultation with the Nova Scotia Barristers' Society (NSBS), amendments to the LRA received Royal Assent on May 27, 2008, and became Chapter 19 of the Acts of 2008.

Over the summer, the Registrar General's Office has been working through the details of regulations to support the changes. These include, particularly, the sections relating to increasing the powers of the Registrar General to hear appeals, correct errors or omissions in a parcel register, hear and investigate complaints arising under the Act, and receive notices and intervene in proceedings affecting parcels of land registered under the Act. Consultation with the NSBS on these regulations and forms will be under way in September and proclamation of Bill 156 is planned for a November-December time frame.

A *Registrar General's Communiqué* devoted to the Bill, regulations, and forms amendments will be issued in the Fall.



### In this issue

## Property Online Layered Access

Property Online (POL) provides access to land related information for Nova Scotia's 600,000 parcels of land. POL has "come a long way" since its introduction in 1997 as the *Nova Scotia Property Records Database On Line*. In those days, it was an online system providing basic land information to real estate professionals. With the advent of an electronically-delivered land titles system, POL has evolved into a full electronic land registry, providing access to scanned documents and plans, and detailed information regarding interests in land for each parcel.

Over the past seven years, through Property Online, we've been providing access to much more land information and improving functionality to move from paper document recording to electronic submission and full electronic access to all county land records.

POL has therefore matured as an information system without, arguably, taking into account the fact that its purpose had shifted to an E-Land Registry from a useful information tool.

POL has multiple user groups with varying needs and uses for information specific to their roles. Some users perform title searching, view related document images and title registers, submit online applications and E-submit documents. Others simply query details to discern ownership, civic addresses and the like.

One issue that the Land Registry has to guard against in this E-Land Registry is risk of loss and breaches of privacy that may be created by the ease of access to sensitive information. In the "old days," the information was available in the LRO vaults, but POL has gathered all details into a convenient place that anyone with access to POL can access. Should POL's full suite of information be available to every POL subscriber?

Halifax and Pictou are, and Yarmouth and Antigonish soon will be, 100 per cent E-Land Registries with remaining counties moving to this concept over the next four years. As with most land titles systems which are largely electronic, authorized user groups have access to information as required for and defined by their business needs. This year we will be investigating layered access in Property Online to ensure we have the appropriate mix of information tailored to the needs of each user group.

There will be more on this topic as we continue the work with various groups in defining these needs.



# E-Land Registry Update

## 100 Percent E-Land Registry Sites

**Yarmouth County:** Yarmouth County breakable book scanning is approximately 75 percent complete. The bound books digital image files have been returned by the vendor; the scanning and QC team have begun the quality control and upload of these images. To date, 4600 plans have been scanned, quality control checked, and uploaded. These are now available for viewing via planlog. Estimated wrap-up for Yarmouth LRO is scheduled for February 2009. We are working with the local and surrounding county bars to plan an information session sometime in the next few months on the move to 100 per cent E-Land Registry for Yarmouth.

**Antigonish County:** All breakable book scanning is complete; bound book microfilm digitization has been completed and is having quality control performed. Uploads will begin very soon. Plans have all been scanned and E-Land Registry staff will be performing quality control of the last 2000. Upload of these is set to begin shortly. Estimated time of completion for Antigonish is scheduled for January 2009. We are working with the local and surrounding county bars to plan an information session sometime in the next few months on the move to 100 per cent E-Land Registry for Antigonish.

**Pictou County:** All breakable books have been scanned and uploaded into POL. Plans have all been scanned and 85 percent uploaded. Scanning and QC staff are completing quality control and uploads will begin shortly. Bound books are 75 percent uploaded. Pictou LRO staff is busy converting the indexes of the remaining 50 books to electronic form. Once complete, the uploads will follow. Pictou is scheduled to wrap up by November 2008.

## 60 Year Sites Clean-up Work

**Lunenburg County:** The Lunenburg clean-up activities are nearing completion with only two books remaining. This will complete all scanning for Lunenburg and Chester breakable books. The scanning team has been traveling to Lunenburg; one trip remains for completion.

**Annapolis:** All Lawrencetown clean-up breakable book uploads are complete.

**Victoria County:** Baddeck clean-up is nearing completion with eight breakable books remaining to be uploaded. Estimated wrap-up is scheduled for September 2008.

**Guysborough:** Clean-up here has not begun. An E-Land Registry team member will travel there to complete this work, budget permitting. All scanning equipment is on site at the Guysborough LRO. Stay tuned for updates.

## New 60-year Sites

**Shelburne:** Plan scanning has begun in Shelburne and is 75 percent complete. Uploads will take place in the coming months. Plan scanning completion is estimated for early October. We may get a head start on scanning breakable books in Shelburne this fiscal year...stay tuned.

**Note:** Don't forget to refer to the E-Land Registry web page (look on the left menu of the Property Online web page) for monthly updates on what is online for each county and what is in progress.



## Joint Routine Audit Program

*Over the past year, the LRA Agreement Sub-committee focused on the re-design of the routine audit program.*

The implementation of a new land titles system by Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations (SNSMR) between 2003 and 2005 included new processes, new technology and new legislation. Prior to the implementation, the Nova Scotia Barristers' Society (NSBS) and SNSMR entered into the Land Registration Act Agreement (LRAA) to establish formal relationships, duties, and responsibilities in administering Nova Scotia's land registration system.

Phase I of the audit re-design was completed between September 2007 and December 2007 and included the following:

- end-to-end process mapping for in-scope land titles processes;
  - confirmation and validation of the risk areas within the land titles processes;
  - evaluation of effectiveness of existing controls and definition of approach for identifying key risk factors; and
- selection of transactions for inclusion in the audit of each of the processes.

Phase II was completed through January to March 2008 and included:

- detailed audit steps and the process for selecting transactions for audit;
- detailed audit programs for each of the seven key land registry processes; and
- development and delivery of training for SNSMR and NSBS auditors to ensure the consistent application of the audit programs.

In addition to the re-design of the audit program done in 2007-2008, NSBS auditors tested some of the first reports generated using the defined risk criteria and conducted several audits based on these. The first quarter audits for 2008-09 are wrapping up and the auditors will start on the second quarter audits very soon.

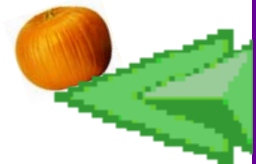


Under the LRAA, a three-part audit process has been established and completed by the NSBS and SNSMR, including Procedural, Routine and Targeted Audits. Throughout 2006-2007, NSBS and SNSMR internally reassessed the routine audit plan and have come to the conclusion that the routine audit plan must be changed so as to include all seven of the key processes and not focus so heavily on the supporting documentation for the conversion process. NSBS and SNSMR also concluded that the audit plan must more effectively focus on risk areas and be as current as possible, executing the audit programs on a quarterly basis.

### Changes to "Ask POL a Question"

1. Mandatory fields have been added to the information entry screen. These are marked with an asterisk.

- \*Name:
- \*Company:
- \*Phone:
- \*Email:
- \*Subject of Call
- \*County (relating to issue, parcel or record)



As noted in blue text (bottom left of entry screen) explaining the rules for mandatory fields:

\* indicates mandatory field.

**Name/Company:** one of these fields should be filled.

**Phone/Email:** one of these fields should be filled.

2. A county drop-down list has been added to indicate which county the issue, parcel or record originates from.

3. The email field will now accept email addresses with a .com extension.

## Appointment:

# Acting Registrar General of Land Titles

As of September 29, 2008, Mark Coffin will be temporarily leaving his role as Registrar General of Land Titles. Mark has accepted an assignment as a Policy Analyst with the Program Management and Corporate Services Division of Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations.

Diane Zwicker, Senior Solicitor with the Department of Justice, will be assuming the role of Acting Registrar General on September 29. Diane has been the solicitor for Land Programs since 2005 and her experience will be invaluable as she transitions to her new role.



Four months ago, the condominium re-design process was implemented. Although the volume of condominium registrations since then has not been large, staff members in some regions have used the new process for registering a new condominium using the new process. They have found it to be much quicker, less complicated, and less susceptible to errors than before. The re-design appears, at this point, to be a great improvement over the previous process — a win/win situation for both staff and external users.

## E-submission News



In the past few months we have implemented a few enhancements to the E-forms to allow more documents to be E-submitted. Enhancements currently being worked on for Fall implementation are: E-Form 45, and Form 26E (the ability to add multiple interest holders), and a few other small defect fixes. The table shows the current statistics province-wide, by percentage, of the total number of Registry of Deeds and Land Titles documents being E-submitted.



Percentage of E-submissions of All Documents Submitted			
COUNTY	Aug-07	Aug-08	Mandatory E-sub Date
Annapolis	10.92	76.51	10-Dec-07
Antigonish	16.48	74.55	10-Dec-07
Cape Breton	13.09	74.19	10-Mar-08
Colchester	25.48	77.68	10-Dec-07
Cumberland	17.23	80.26	10-Dec-07
Digby	25.51	83	10-Dec-07
Guysborough	19.58	74.07	10-Mar-08
Halifax	33.02	78.78	4-Feb-08
Hants	32.38	77.25	10-Dec-07
Inverness	49.56	70.77	10-Mar-08
Kings	19.21	78.35	10-Dec-07
Lunenburg	23.56	74.94	25-Feb-08
Pictou	20.23	80.84	10-Dec-07
Queens	28.19	79.38	25-Feb-08
Richmond	46.56	70.37	10-Mar-08
Shelburne	26.1	73.63	25-Feb-08
Victoria	13.56	68	10-Mar-08
Yarmouth	28.57	71.47	25-Feb-08
<b>Total</b>	<b>27.08</b>	<b>77.44</b>	