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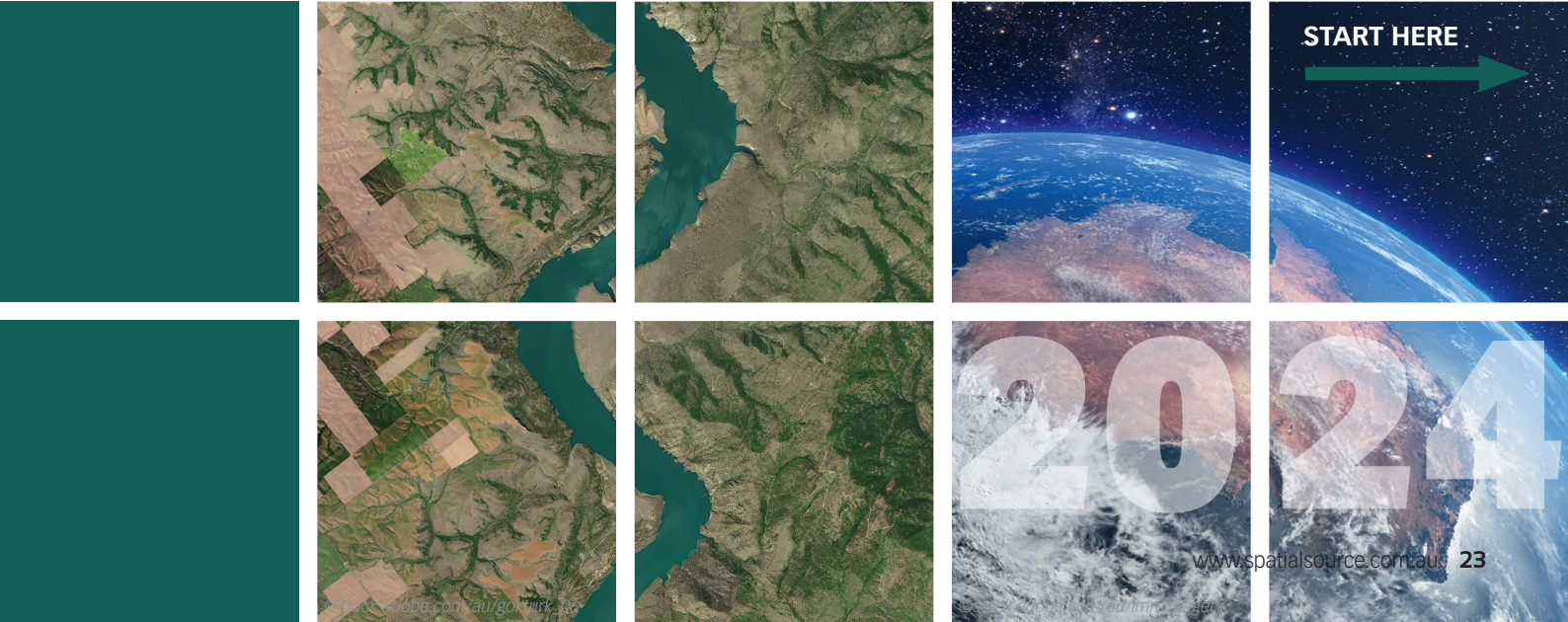
LEADERS FORUM 2024



Welcome to *Position's* third annual Leaders Forum, in which we ask geospatial experts to share their insights into the current state of the sector, where it is headed in 2024 and how we'll get there.

We asked them to identify which problems they see as being the most pressing and how they might be solved, whilst also identifying the industry's strengths and its capacity to find solutions for some of the world's most demanding challenges.

So please turn the page and begin your glimpse into what the world of geospatial will look like over the coming 12 months.





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“There is no doubt that innovation will continue to bring forward new opportunities.”

Peter Terrett

Managing Director, 4D Global



As a former geodetic and topographic surveyor for state government, Peter Terrett developed a deep interest in GPS technology. In 1991 started his first business supplying GPS equipment, consulting, training, and software product development. It has grown to include field services and desktop GIS.

Workforce supply issues have dominated discussion in recent years. Do you think enough is being done?

No, I do not think that enough is being done. This is a problem that has been around for two decades, and we have made little progress. Most professions are now facing similar skills shortages. In our sector the problem is exacerbated by three things.

First, the geospatial courses in Australia are all called something different – wouldn't it be great if all courses were under the heading 'geospatial,' and the specialty study areas were named after that?

Secondly, the ANZSCO classification system does not accurately represent the contemporary landscape of geospatial occupations. Geospatial professionals from surveying, hydrography, GIS and visualisation to remote sensing and applications development, possess specialised skills and job titles that are often scattered across other professional fields, resulting in a fragmented representation of one of Australia's fastest-evolving sectors. I like the submission the GCA made to the ABS to reform the ANZSCO occupation codes to address this issue. The compelling recommendation is to elevate geospatial to the status of a Sub-Major Group and Minor Group within the ANZSCO classification.

Thirdly, more effective marketing campaigns to attract not just school leavers but also those from other occupations looking for a career change.

What other challenges are facing the sector, and what are the solutions?

There is a terribly poor understanding or acknowledgement in the wider community and across all sectors of business, of the value of geospatial, or even the existence of the important work done by various specialties of surveyors, hydrographers, remote sensing professionals and geospatial analysts. We therefore need to build industry recognition across all levels of government, other sectors of the economy and the wider community. The forthcoming GCA-commissioned ACIL Allen Economic Impact Study will be an important piece of work. By understanding where we are today in terms of the economic impact of geospatial on our national economy, we can have a better understanding of where we need to be 10 years from now.

Which technologies or innovations are going to make their mark in 2024?

Our industry is so broad that this is a very big question. But there

is no doubt that innovation will continue to bring forward new opportunities and better ways of managing our planet through geospatial. One area expected to bring exponential benefits is AI and machine learning, which will move quickly to address a lot of the skills shortages for many tasks such as asset identification and maintenance issues. Another is that sensor technologies are getting better, cheaper, smaller and lighter, making it far more economical to launch satellites for Earth observation. And cheaper platforms (hardware and cloud processing) for mobile mapping (360 cameras, LiDAR etc) will provide data to better manage assets and the environment in response to things like climate change.

What's on your wish list for 2024?

For the industry, to see the great work of the GCA accelerate to move the industry forward. Much has already been achieved in a relatively short amount of time and in many ways has set the foundation to move forward with momentum of a shared vision of the future. For my businesses, I want to be able to find and engage with the people who can truly benefit from our expertise.

What are your company's plans or priorities for 2024?

We are going through a major upgrade to our entire software platform to take advantage of new supporting hardware and software. Location has never been easier or cheaper to define and with a product as simple as a smart phone, data about the object of the location can be digitally entered to start its' journey in managing the object's life cycle. ■