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DOLA's Blood Appreciated

The Red Cross has recognised DOLA's ongoing contribution to the Blood Bank with a Certificate of Appreciation. While giving blood in the early 1980s, Ian Humphreys, who was with the Geodetic Section in St Georges Terrace, noticed some DOLA colleagues coming and going from the Red Cross.

"I thought it would be a good idea to formalise our efforts and go as a group, representing the Department," Ian said.

"When I started asking around I was amazed at the number of people who wanted to help. We were also able to organise a tour of the Blood Bank."

DOLA's move to Midland didn't stop the generous donations.

"Staff still wanted to give, so every four months the Red Cross sent out its mobile unit, a converted MTT bus with six beds."

When the Red Cross replaced the bus with a small van, Ian enlisted the Social Club to help set aside the amenities room for donations.

To help coordinate DOLA's efforts, Ian has created a computer program to keep track of donors and donation times. The database is regularly updated and ensures that staff can continue to give blood with minimal disruption.

Ian, who is planning to retire this year, has recently handed over the coordinator's role to Basil Rompotis.



"Blood donations are a vital community service, and it's great to see so many people helping out by giving blood," said Basil.

Over the years DOLA staff have donated thousands of pints of blood to the Red Cross and have received a number of certificates of appreciation. Despite the healthy number of DOLA donors, various factors, such as annual leave and sickness can affect the turnout of donors and Basil said he was happy to continue adding people to the list.

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WA's first AURISA Councillor

Eugene Browne, of DOLA's Land Information Services, has been elected Western Australia's first councillor for AURISA, the Australian Urban and Regional Information Systems Association.



Eugene was delighted with the result of the Australia wide postal ballot.

Eugene has been associated with the Western Australian Chapter of AURISA since 1984, serving two terms as WA Chapter Chair.

In 1997 he was awarded the AURISA Service Award for his contribution to the Association, including being a member of both committees which organised the association's national conferences in Perth.

A review of the AURISA 98 conference in Perth by GIS User Magazine rated it as "...the biggest GIS show in Australasia and still the best, despite all the competition."

One of the council's tasks is to ensure that this November's conference in Leura, in the Blue Mountains west of Sydney, is equally successful.

The association, of which DOLA is a corporate member, is a multi-disciplinary body with members from spatial information and associated professions. With an emphasis on spatial information systems policy, applications and technology, AURISA is the principal information source for urban and regional information systems in the Australian, New Zealand and Asia Pacific Region.

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DOLA views freeway tunnel

DOLA staff have been given a special look at Perth's Graham Farmer Freeway Tunnel.

DOLA staff involved in various aspects of the project were invited by Main Roads WA (MRWA) to tour the tunnel and get a 'worm's eye' view.

MRWA's Road Reserves Manager, Alf Parolo, led the tour through the tunnel, starting at the western end near Charles Street. The group walked the 1.6 kilometres of the tunnel in what will be the east-bound lanes to the exit near Lord Street, and came back along the west-bound lanes.

The tunnel is still under construction and, although the workers were having a rostered day off at the time of the tour, DOLA employees were able to see the various stages of construction.

"The tour enabled us to see what our input is bringing about," said Manager of Land Boundary Services, Barry Cribb.



DOLA has been significantly involved in many stages of the project, including mapping, survey control, road reserve and resumption actions, policy and legal advice.

"It is a major project. Its uniqueness has also meant that DOLA has had to adopt new approaches to deal with some of the issues raised," said Barry.

The tunnel has been built using the "top down" approach. The roof and walls were put in place from the surface, and then the tunnel was excavated from underneath the roof and between the walls.

As the excavation proceeded from the western end, the concrete floor was laid and the central walls and passage were constructed.

The tunnel is due for completion later this year and the freeway is due to be operational by mid-2000.

It will reduce traffic congestion on the Causeway and Riverside Drive, enabling much quicker access to the Mitchell and Kwinana Freeways and western parts of the city.

Barry Cribb said it was pleasing to see the partnership between the Ministry for Planning, MRWA and DOLA continuing to deliver effective outcomes.

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International Women's Day breakfast

More than 100 people celebrated International Women's Day at the annual breakfast hosted by DOLA.

Among the guests were Federal and State MPs, local government councillors, businesswomen from the wine, hospitality and tourism industries and DOLA staff members.

The guest speaker was Sister Veronica Brady, author, social commentator and some-time panel member of TV's "Good News Week", who called for more cooperation and compassion to overcome major social issues.

"On International Women's Day, we begin to realise that our task is to re-evaluate our values," she said.

"We are reaching the end of what we call the millennium. It is clear that our whole civilisation is reaching a point of crisis with unemployment, drugs, and other social issues. It is a sign that perhaps we have got it wrong."

Dr Brady spoke of two differing philosophies.

One was the 'masculine economy', based on property and appropriation. The second was the 'feminine economy'.

"In this, you are not just an individual, you are part of the fabric of life. We all depend on one another. We should know that we are related to one another, and that we can trust one another."

The Chief Executive of DOLA, Mr Allan Skinner, said that 1999 was a particularly significant year for Western Australia, as it was the centenary of Women's Suffrage in the State.

"I feel that it is appropriate that DOLA, as a major employer in the region, should host an annual event to mark International Women's Day."

State West Credit Society helped to sponsor the breakfast.



Sister Veronica Brady (left) meets DOLA Director, Heather Brown.

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Champion cyclist gears up for DOLA

World champion cyclist, Mathew Gray, has recently joined DOLA as Workforce Planning Officer at Midland.

Mathew, who is 21, started cycling in 1994 after being introduced to the sport by his elder brother. In less than two years, when he was barely 18, Mathew won a silver medal at the Atlanta Paralympics.

In 1998 he became the world champion in the 1000m Olympic sprint, held in Colorado Springs, U.S.A. He will defend this title at the next world championships in 2001.

At the National Championships, held in Perth recently, Mathew successfully defended his 1km Time Trial and Sprint titles.

He also won silver in the 4000m pursuit, missing out on gold by just 3/100ths of a second. Now his eyes are set firmly on the Sydney 2000 Paralympics, where he will compete in the 1000m time trial, the three-man sprint and the individual pursuit.

"I'm training six days a week, doing up to 700 kilometres a week," said Mathew.

"But with plenty of competition coming up, it's not all just training. I hope to go to the European championships in France in June, when I'll be able to catch some of the action of the Tour de France," he said.

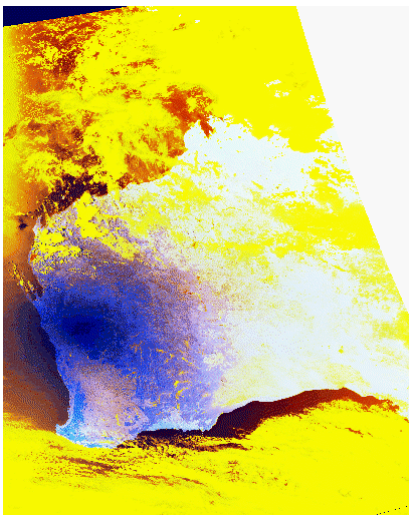
"Later in the year, I'll be able to compete in an international event at the new velodrome in Sydney, which will be the first opportunity cyclists will have to use the Olympic facilities." While his sporting pursuits have brought him success, Mathew is now committed to planning his career.

"I've spent the past three years totally devoted to cycling, but I know it is important to lay the foundations for what comes after sport."

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Annular eclipse captured by satellite

February's annular eclipse of the sun was captured by the satellite NOAA-14, which was travelling north over Western Australia at the same time that the eclipse was visible over part of the State.



The Annular eclipse of the sun, as seen by NOAA-14

Many parts of Western Australia experienced a partial eclipse of the sun, with the Mid-west of the State appearing much darker than normal, as can be seen on the image at right.

The raw data for the image was downloaded at a receiving station in Perth, operated by the Western Australian Satellite Technology and Applications Consortium, (WASTAC).

The consortium maintains a reliable, comprehensive and accessible archive of NOAA-AVHRR and SeaWiFS satellite data.

WASTAC is comprised of the Commonwealth Bureau of Meteorology, DOLA's Satellite Remote Sensing Services Branch, Curtin University of Technology's Remote Sensing and Satellite Research Group, and the CSIRO's Office of Space Science and Applications.

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National award for DOLA's aerial images

DOLA was presented with the silver award at the 12th Government Technology Productivity Awards in Canberra.

DOLA produced the high-resolution aerial photographs of the Perth metropolitan area at the request of the Police Service, who use the aerial photographs to enhance strategic planning, gathering highly detailed information about emergency and crime scenes.

The high-resolution images contain almost ten times the detail of standard aerial photographs. As well as individual houses and properties, street fixtures such as bus stops, telephone boxes and power poles can be easily identified on the photographs.

The information is stored on 54 CDs, each covering an area of 12km by 20km - approximately equivalent to 12 pages in the StreetSmart Perth Street Directory.

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DOLA appoints new Director of Corporate Services

Ross Blakey has been appointed DOLA's new Director of Corporate Services.

Ross joins DOLA from RS Components, where he was Finance Director for Australia, New Zealand, Singapore and Malaysia.

RS Components is a market leader in the service and distribution of electrical and industrial components. Prior to RS Components, Ross was with Tony Barlow Menswear, where he managed the public float of the company in 1986.

Ross is looking forward to the opportunities at DOLA, where his extensive experience in the private sector will help develop business-oriented strategies, including looking at ways of measuring service and performance.

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Development Institute visits DOLA

Members of the Urban Development Institute of Australia (WA) visited DOLA during March. Fifteen members, including the Chairman of the Institute's Government Relations Committee, Colin Evans, were given a presentation on issues affecting developers in Western Australia.

The presentation covered a wide range of topics including the implications of the new Land Administration Act, DOLA's work towards a digital Register and Certificate of Title, aerial photography aids for developers, and native title.

DOLA's Director of Service Delivery, Grahame Searle, also explained the latest developments in aerial photography, which provide higher quality digital images.



Director of Service Delivery, Grahame Searle explains the latest developments in aerial photography.

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Regional service enhanced

The Department of Land Administration is aiming to enhance its service through the creation of specialist regional teams.

DOLA's manager of Land Administration Services, Peter McNally, says the teams will be able to respond quickly and efficiently to issues in the various regions.

"Our Land Administration Services branch is very pro-active. We are getting out and about, meeting, talking, listening."

DOLA now has self-contained teams to represent the Metropolitan, South East, South West, Mid West, Pilbara and Kimberley regions.

The Metropolitan region

This covers 30 local government areas from the Shire of Wanneroo in the north, to the City of Rockingham and the Shire of Serpentine-Jarrahdale in the south, and east to the Shire of Mundaring. The manager is Henty Farrar.



The South West Regional Team.

The South West region

This covers the coastal area from north of Mandurah to Augusta and includes places such as Collie, Manjimup and Walpole. The team is based in Bunbury and provides the full range of DOLA services and products. The manager is Graham Higgins.

The South East region

This covers the major centres of Kalgoorlie-Boulder and Albany as well as Merredin, Corrigin, Pingelly, Narrogin, Bremer Bay and Esperance. The Manager is John Silla.

The new Mid West region

This covers the area from the Shire of Northampton in the north, to the Shire of Gingin in the south, and east to Cue and Mount Marshall. It also encompasses the districts and population centres of Geraldton, Mullewa, Dalwallinu, Moora and Wyalkatchem. The manager is John Willis.

The Pilbara region

This covers 12 local government regions, with population centres such as Port Hedland, Karratha, Newman, Carnarvon, Tom Price, Exmouth, Denham and Meekathara. The manager is Ken McCrackan.

The Kimberley region

Based in Kununurra, this office covers such diverse locations as Broome, Derby and Wyndham. The manager is Mike Wilde.

The creation of the teams is part of a major re-structure at DOLA. "DOLA is committed to continuous improvement, and the creation of the regional teams is another part of that commitment," said Peter.

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'Bay' back for Jurien

The town of Jurien has got its 'bay' back. Originally gazetted as Jurien Bay in December 1956, the town has been officially known as Jurien since 1959.

Now, a recommendation by DOLA's Geographic Names Committee that it revert to its original name has been approved.

The Shire of Dandaragan had proposed the name change to its residents, and there had been an overwhelming response in favour of going back to the original name.

The secretary of the Geographic Names Committee, Brian Goodchild, said that the 1959 decision to remove the word 'bay' from the town's name was made because the then Nomenclature Advisory Committee felt that the name Jurien Bay should apply only to the geographic feature. The local authority at the time, the Dandaragan Roads Board, did not support the name change and said that it felt that no matter what official name was given, the town would always be known as Jurien Bay.

"I am happy to admit that they have been proved right," Brian said.

"It is difficult to justify the exclusion of the word 'bay' on the grounds that it should be applied only

to the geographic feature when other town names, such as Bremer Bay, include the word," he said.

A French expedition in 1801 named the site, about 260 km north west of Perth, after Charles Marie Vicomte Jurien, a French naval administrator.

The first evidence of interest in development at Jurien Bay was when a reserve for Shipping and Landing was declared in 1887. A church, built in 1931, was demolished by the army in early 1942 because it was felt it could be a landmark for a possible invasion.

Continued use of the area by campers and fishermen led to the Government gazetting a townsite in 1956.

The story behind Jurien and many other place names in Western Australia can be found on the DOLA web site.

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A Question of Service

DOLA's annual customer satisfaction survey is about to get under way.

Next month, about 800 clients will be asked for their views on the full range of DOLA services.

Some will be telephoned - selected at random from DOLA's client lists - or approached directly as they finish a transaction at the agency's Midland offices. They will be asked to respond to questions on services and products.

The interview sessions will not take long, but the information gained will help DOLA improve its services and products.

The survey will be conducted by an independent research group, Research Solutions. The company will provide only aggregated results to DOLA, ensuring that clients' responses remain confidential.

If you have any queries about the survey, you can contact Bryan Franklin at DOLA on (08) 9273 7028 or Nicki Munro of Research Solutions on (08) 9328 7087.

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FPA award to DOLA

The Fremantle Port Authority (FPA) has recognised DOLA's work in clearing the way for the sale of land at North Quay.

The maritime authority has presented DOLA with a plaque for excellence in customer service.

A number of DOLA staff contributed to the project, which saw the rationalisation of land at North Quay and the issue of certificates of title to the FPA.

The staff had to interpret relevant legislation and identify the complex procedures necessary for the sale of land to the authority, including arranging survey and native title clearances.

DOLA also obtained the necessary approvals and coordinated the conveyancing and settlement arrangements.

DOLA's input has enabled the FPA to progress its commercialisation program, which began in 1995. Legislation is due to be proclaimed later this year.

Those involved included Chris Williams, Director of Government Land Services, Graham Higgins, Denis Millan, Dick Austin, Russell Baulch, Ross Pearce, Mick Dallas, Kevin Emrose and George Poppas.

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DOLA signs with MITS

The Department of Land Administration has signed a four year contract with systems integration company, MITS.

The contract will provide network support for DOLA services.



Chief Executive, Allan Skinner signs the contract with MITS.

Under the contract, MITS will deliver support services to both DOLA's local area network (LAN) and wide area network (WAN).

DOLA's WAN provides communication between its offices at Midland, Floreat, and regional offices in Kununurra and Bunbury.

DOLA also has links to various agencies, including the Department of Agriculture, Ministry of Planning and WA Police Service.

MITS will provide additional desktop support services to selected areas, including DOLA's head office.

The initial agreement calls for the servicing of 250 desktop computers, including Intel-based PCs running general Windows, corporate Client Server-based applications and Unix workstations for specific applications.

Desktop equipment is also linked to existing mainframe-based tenure and spatial applications, which service internal business activities as well as a wide external client base.

DOLA's Manager of IT Services, Dick Berry, said that information technology plays an integral part in the Department's ability to deliver effective services to the public.

"Our LAN, WAN and desktop services are key elements within the total IT infrastructure," he said.

"One of the chief aims of this contract is to gain economies of scale and consolidate a number of contracts under a single banner. I believe that this contract will do that, effectively ensuring value for money. This will benefit both DOLA and its customers."

For the past two decades, DOLA has been a leader in using technology to enhance customer service.

DOLA uses satellite images and aerial photography to create world-class maps, in both the traditional form and on CD-ROM.

The latest technological advances provide fast and efficient transfers and searches of land documents, with as many as 5000 searches in one day.

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DOLA Year 2000 Status as at April 1999

DOLA is well advanced in the Year 2000 testing program.

The Year 2000 Project team is progressively testing all systems likely to be affected by the 'Y2K Bug'.

- *Testing of the Human Resource and Payroll application was completed in March, along with Digital Survey Lodgment, the Image Viewer System and the Pastoral Lease Information System. Upgrading of the Financial Management System to the Year 2000 ready version began on 12 April. Testing is expected to be completed by the end of June.*
- *Over the past two years the Image System has been subject to a major software upgrade. The upgrade is Year 2000 ready and is available for use in conjunction with our mainframe Year 2000 systems testing.*
- *Testing of mainframe systems, including the Customer Remote Search and Image System Fax-back service, was due to start in late April. This is a major task expected to take six to eight weeks. GE Capital IT Solutions and Kodak Australasia have supplied the discrete testing environments required for this work.*
- *In conjunction with MITS and Unisys Australia, DOLA is upgrading Local and Wide Area Networks to Year 2000 ready configurations. A test network has been established to verify their readiness. Testing of PC applications is now being scheduled and DOLA expects to complete the priority applications by the end of June.*
- *Security Access and Airconditioning systems will be Year 2000 ready by the end of May. All other building systems are Year 2000 ready.*

DOLA is responding to its many client enquiries regarding the Year 2000 program, and encourages contact from private and government agencies with regard to specific systems and/or IT interfaces.

For further information please contact Russell Cooper, Year 2000 Project Manager by e-mail: russell_cooper@dola.wa.gov.au or by telephone: (08) 9273 7517.

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Competition goes hi-tech

Schools entering DOLA's Swan Valley Discovery Competition can get all the information they need on CD-ROM.

The CD was launched at the Bellevue Primary School by DOLA's Chief Executive, Allan Skinner.

Mr Skinner told principals and teachers that each year, DOLA strives to make the competition even more appealing to schools in the area.



The competition was originally designed to enable DOLA to get to know the community after moving to Midland.

Mr Skinner recalled that the first competition, held in 1992, attracted about 150 entries from six schools. Last year there was work from more than 1700 students in 17 different schools.

He also noted other changes that had occurred: "In 1992, all of the entries were on paper or cardboard. Last year, we had entries on audiotape, videotape, and CD-ROM, as well as one entry which had been produced using enhancement tools on the computer.

"In 1998, for the first time, we put the competition material on the Internet and recorded something like 2200 hits in six months. More than 300 files were downloaded."

Mr Skinner said that some of the categories in this year's competition actively encourage the use of the latest technological processes.

"We have not abandoned the traditional categories. We have simply widened the choice."

The CD also has links to Internet sites, which will help in research for the competition. Updated competition material will also be placed on DOLA's web page.

This year's centenary of Women's Suffrage in Western Australia forms the basis for two of the categories in the competition.

The competition is supported by the Shire of Swan and includes a special Shire award within the competition.

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