

Keep Them Sharp!

You are, as a geomatics professional, working in one of the most rapidly growing areas of the world economy. Geomatics is all around us and there is loads of work ahead. The government of India has granted an enormous commission to the world's biggest software giant to make the vast volume of geodata accessible to government workers, surveyors and the public. This will facilitate, for example, future disaster warning, and planning for building and construction or agriculture. Imagine the economic stimulus of this job, and the offshoot of prosperity that will hopefully accompany it.

In the case of India, it was not the Tsunami disaster that led to the decision for a new system - but this will come in handy, of course, in relief for victims. The Tsunami disaster itself is, despite its bitter nature, a supercharger for the development of new techniques in surveying, charting and gaining data. Sadly, one man's meat is another man's poison, and vice versa.

And those who think that the boost is occurring only in developing or disaster-struck regions of the world should think again. Following smaller European countries as The Netherlands and Denmark, the French Order of Chartered Surveyors is setting up a Global Navigation Satellite System. That system will integrate satellite geo-referencing and thus allow any user to position himself, in real time, with down to centimetre accuracy, anywhere on French territory. *The Ordre des Géomètres Experts* estimates that five hundred chartered surveyors, one third of the profession, is currently supporting roll-out of the network.

But it speaks for itself that geomatic experts are supporting the French network. It's their future. Just as development of a GIS for India is the future for a lot of professionals over there. And this is true whether they're working in the field or as a manager in the office. Besides the chances arising for professionals, producers of tools, software and other systems in geomatics are looking at the challenge of keeping up with developments. The growing importance of geomatics, its expansion into adjacent areas and the growing tendency towards multidisciplinary groups working together in the field means that producers have continually to take into account user friendliness and applicability in order to retain their position in the marketplace.

One thing is sure: companies most able to deal with the demands of the surveyor, data processor or manager will be the best business partners in coming years. Your responsibility as a professional is to keep them sharp and continue to point out possible improvement. On GIM International we try to help you with that responsibility.