

# Surveyor Licences in Poland – Professional Aspects, Association Contribution

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**Key words:** licensing of land surveyors, association's role.

## ABSTRACT

The paper presents the principles of professional licensing of land surveyors in Poland. The process of professional licensing started in the early thirties of the last century, but it was interrupted in 1939. Though the licensed (chartered) surveyors have been acting until 1953 they got their licences before the II World War. Neither political nor social conditions in Poland made it possible to restore licensing of land surveyors earlier than in 1983. At that time restitution of free surveying profession occurred possible just in early dawn of the process of political and economic changes in Poland. Minister of Physical Planning was the body granting the licence (presently Surveyor General). Association of Polish Surveyors organises the training-courses to prepare candidates for proper state-board examinations. Surveying licence is indispensable to act in free profession in Poland. The Polish "Law of Surveying" obliges candidates for surveying public service to be also licensed surveyors. As the licensing links the problems of professional knowledge, professional experience and professional ethics, authors suggest increase of the role of professional association in the process of licensing. Closer cooperation within FIG Commission 1 could be also advisable and very helpful.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Licensing of land surveyors is highly related to issues of education, privatisation of surveying profession and recognition of professional qualifications. These issues were discussed during the FIG Working Week, held in Seoul, May 6-11,2001.

In majority of the countries recognition of professional qualifications relates the rights to perform surveying works within areas not limited by state borders and are connected with forms of professional licensing of land surveyors.

In many countries, as in Germany, for example, the rules resulting from legal regulations concerning executing of specified types of surveying works are obligatory (TEETZMANN, 2000). The Polish legal regulations list types of surveying activities, which may be performed by every surveyor graduated from the university or from the technical school of surveying. However, only licensed land surveyors are authorised to perform specific surveying projects as well as develop proper documentation.

The procedures of professional licensing of land surveyors have long tradition in Poland and started in the twentieth of the past century.

The authors intend to present issues related to professional licensing of land surveyors in Poland with respect to historical aspects and to the current situation. The authors want to point directions of modifications and changes in the discussed principles considering tendencies, which occur in the world and which are the subject of wide discussions within FIG.

## 2. THE CHARTERED SURVEYOR – THE LICENSED SURVEYOR IN THE PERIOD 1925 – 1952

The CHARTERED SURVEYOR was the name of a licensed surveyor who was authorised to perform all works connected with surveying in Poland restored in 1918 as in an independent country.

Such authorisation was assigned after meeting criteria specified in the decree on chartered surveyors, dated July 15,1925.

Every land surveyor who met the following five criteria could gain the title and rights to perform the profession of the chartered surveyor:

- 1) who had the Polish citizenship,
- 2) who had completed appropriate studies,
- 3) who had undergone special practical courses,
- 4) who had passed the practical examination,
- 5) who had not been deprived of rights to vote.

The term “appropriate studies” was used as an equivalent to get the title of a graduated surveying engineer; such person was obliged to undergo two-year professional practical courses.

Completion of appropriate studies was also equivalent to completion of domestic or foreign schools, which were not authorised to assign titles of graduated engineers. However, it was obligatory to undergo five-year professional practical courses in this case.

Completion of the professional practical courses authorised to take a practical examination, which was held in front of a commission nominated by the Minister of Public Works. The scope of such examination covered:

- 1) The ability of independent performance of technical-and-legal activity, which were exclusively assigned by law to surveyors,
- 2) Knowledge of decrees, ordinances and instructions related to the profession of surveyor.

The title of a chartered surveyor was granted by the voivode<sup>1</sup>, appropriate for the place of living of the surveyor. The right to grant authorisation and to nominate chartered surveyors was terminated in the forties of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

The institution of the chartered surveyor was liquidated in 1952, i.e. after 27 years of existence. This was related to departure from the market economy and to common socialisation of economic entities. As a result, there were no possibilities for operating of private entities and, therefore, licensing of land surveyors was unnecessary.

### **3. A LICENSED SURVEYOR WITH RESPECT TO THE CURRENT LEGAL REGULATIONS**

Resuming of professional licensing of surveyors authorised to perform independent works in the field of surveying and cartography took place in the eighties, after the break, which lasted for almost 30 years.

The terms „to perform independent works in the field of surveying and cartography” as well as criteria related to assigning professional qualifications, were specified in the legal act “The law of surveying and cartography”.

This legal act specifies types of activities, that should be performed by surveyors having the professional qualifications. Such activities included:

- 1) Management of surveying and cartographic works, which must be included to the state surveying and cartographic resources as well as direct supervision of such works,
- 2) Carrying out expert activities in the field of surveying and cartographic works, which should be included to the state surveying and cartographic resources,
- 3) Playing a role of an supervising inspector in the field of surveying and cartography,
- 4) Carrying out technical and administration activities related to delimitation of real estates,

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<sup>1</sup> Governor of the province in Poland

- 5) Carrying out surveying and cartographic works required for making records in land registers and carrying out works, which might be dangerous for human health or life.

Every surveyor in Poland may be granted professional qualifications to perform the above activities, if he/she meets the following criteria:

- 1) If he/she has the university education in the field of surveying and 3 years of professional practice or the secondary technical education and 6 years of professional practice,
- 2) If he/she proves the knowledge of regulations obligatory in the field of surveying and cartography,
- 3) If he/she has the excellent professional opinion.

Testing the knowledge of regulations in the field of surveying and cartography is performed in the form of a written examination and an oral examination in front of the Qualifying Commission nominated by the Surveyor General of Poland.

Professional licences are granted in the following fields:

- 1) Topographic, implementation and inventory surveys,
- 2) Delimitation and division of real estate plots and preparation of documentation for legal purposes,
- 3) Control network establishing,
- 4) Engineering surveys,
- 5) Cadastre and land management,
- 6) Map editing,
- 7) Photogrammetry and remote sensing.

A surveyor, who is interested in getting professional licence, may choose one, two or more fields, if he/she can document practical experiences in those fields.

The condition required for getting the licence is passing the examination concerning the knowledge of legal regulations and technical principles concerning surveying and cartographic works, corresponding to the fields of professional licences, which were applied in the application form.

#### **4. THE ROLE OF THE ASSOCIATION OF POLISH SURVEYORS IN THE PROCESS OF PROFESSIONAL LICENSING OF SURVEYORS**

According to the obligatory legal regulations, professional licences are granted by the Surveyor General of Poland, basing on the results of qualification procedures, performed by the Qualification Commission.

According to the separate agreement with the Surveyor General of Poland, the Association of Polish Surveyors is authorised to perform the qualification procedure in the field of professional licensing of surveyors.

The composition of the Qualification Commission, which is nominated by the Surveyor General, is specified in the consultation with the Association of Polish Surveyors. Besides playing a role of the organiser of the qualification procedure, the Association of the Polish Surveyors performs series of training courses for surveyors, who are interested in getting professional licences.

At present, those training courses are mainly focused on the knowledge of legal regulations and applied technology, with particular respect to computer-assisted technology.

It seems, that curricula of those training courses, which are performed by the Association of Polish Surveyors within procedures related to professional licensing of surveyors, should be extend of the following topics:

- Principles of business activities,
- Theory of marketing,
- Elements of psychology, related to customer services and ability to carry out works related to delimitation of real estates and to consolidation works,
- Professional ethics,
- Organisational and legal structures of surveying in the countries of European Union,
- Popularisation of results of works of the FIG Commissions in the field of:
  - Ethical assumptions and model professional codes,
  - Interpretation and promotion of professional standards,
  - Directions of activities related to the common respect of professional licences.

Commencement of the above activities by the Association of Polish Surveyors seems to be extremely important with respect to the coming date (2004), when Poland is to become the member of the European Union.

Practical elimination of state borders and generation of a uniform market, including the market of surveying works in Europe will require implementation of the above-mentioned tasks.

The Association of Polish Surveyors will hopefully be the main body, which will perform the main part of those tasks related, first of all, with professional licensing of surveyors.

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## BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES

**Kazimierz Czarnecki** - Professor of the Warsaw University of Technology and of the Military University of Technology. He is the author of dozens publications and papers presented to the international symposia. His main interests focus on geodesy and geodynamics. He is the author of the 488-pages-text-book on geodesy. He was elected as the President of the Association of Polish Surveyors first for two successive terms of office (1983-86, 1986-89), then for another two terms (1998-2001, 2001-04). He is the member of the Committee for Geodesy of the Polish Academy of Sciences. He was active in

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