



Guidance Notes for Land Boundary Survey

2022

Preface

While the Land Survey Ordinance has prescribed relevant technical standards to the Authorized Land Surveyors, The Hong Kong Institute of Surveyors (“HKIS”) is obligated to prescribe equivalent technical guidelines to all professional members who are involved in the land boundary surveying service. The introduction of the HKIS Guidance Notes for Land Boundary Survey since 2013 (“Guidance Notes”) demonstrated the leading effort of the HKIS in setting out the professional procedure and standard of the land boundary survey service in Hong Kong.

The Guidance Notes informs the general public on the role, ethics and operational requirements on our professional members who engage in land boundary surveying service. Needless to say, the Guidance Notes also serves as a user-friendly reminder to our professional members on our obligations to the clients and society-at-large.

Acknowledgement

Assiduous efforts have been made by the Boundary Survey Advisory Committee of the Land Surveying Division to develop the first edition of the Guidelines in 2013. I would like to express my gratitude to the Task Forces formed since 2013 to develop and update the Guidance Notes with the members’ name listed on the next page. The Guidance Notes is unquestionably a fruitful result of their time and thoughts. It is a great service to the HKIS for which I express my deepest appreciation.

Sr Paul Tsui
Chairman
Land Surveying Division
The Hong Kong Institute of Surveyors

May 2022

Task Force for the Guidance Notes (2013 Edition)

Chairman:

Sr Dr Conrad Tang

Members (in alphabetical order of the last names):

Sr Ronald Chan

Sr Ken Ching

Sr Leung Shou-chun, MBE

Sr Sham Po-fai

Sr Tang Wing-lun

Sr Joseph Wong

Sr Yiu Ka-ming

Sr Edmond Yu

Task Force for the Guidance Notes (2022 Edition)

Chairman:

Sr Alex Chu

Members (in alphabetical order of the last names):

Sr Lee Yiu-hing

Sr Dr Conrad Tang

Sr Tang Wing-lun

Sr Winnie Wong

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Prepared by:
Land Surveying Division
The Hong Kong Institute of Surveyors
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1. Definition

- 1.1 **Professional Surveyor** means a Professional Grade member of The Hong Kong Institute of Surveyors.
- 1.2 Unless otherwise specifically provided, words and expressions importing the masculine gender include the female gender.

2. Objectives

- 2.1 The HKIS is the only surveying professional body incorporated by Ordinance for all professional surveyors practicing in Hong Kong. To maintain a mandatory professional standard, the HKIS publishes the Guidance Notes to set out the survey principles and technical standards for carrying out land boundary surveys in the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region by Professional Surveyors. The Guidance Notes should be read in conjunction with the latest version of Code of Practice approved by the Land Survey Authority under the Land Survey Ordinance (Cap. 473) (“the COP”), which stipulates in detail the requirements and procedures for carrying out a land boundary survey.
- 2.2 The Guidance Notes may also serve the following general purposes:-
 - 2.2.1 As a self-reminding document for the Professional Surveyor;
 - 2.2.2 As a pledge of one’s performance by an individual Professional Surveyor to his clients; and
 - 2.2.3 As a handy reference for allied professionals to realize the quality of service and the survey standard expected of a Professional Surveyor.
- 2.3 In the case where the boundary of a land parcel is to be ascertained by a land boundary survey that entails the Professional Surveyor to prepare field notes, survey record plans and/ or land boundary plans, upon which lot boundary is defined with coordinates, it is recommended that the Professional Surveyors in the Land Surveying Division should be consulted.

3. Roles of the Professional Surveyor

- 3.1 The primary role of the Professional Surveyor in land boundary survey is to enable people to enjoy secured land boundary rights and to facilitate settlements in respect of land boundary disputes.
- 3.2 In daily practice, his role is to advise clients on the dimension, area, location and other relevant geo-informatics data of the land lot under survey. He also defines and demarcates on ground the boundary points and other related alignments.

- 3.3 In carrying out land boundary survey, the Professional Surveyor must apply good practice and maintain high standard in performing his professional duties, such as to collect the boundary related evidences as far as practicable, provide his professional judgement for the reliability and weighting of the collected boundary evidences, identify the most critical evidences as adopted in his final boundary determination. The Professional Surveyor shall prepare a survey report illustrating them in a clear and logical manner.

4. Ethics in Conducting Land Boundary Survey

- 4.1 In carrying out, directing or supervising a land boundary survey, the Professional Surveyor must always bear in mind the responsibility of being a member of the Institute, the duty of care towards his clients, and the liability as a consequence of any improper boundary determination.
- 4.2 In defining a land lot boundary, the Professional Surveyor should take every care to avoid inducing unnecessary boundary conflicts as part of his primary role.
- 4.3 A Professional Surveyor must release his boundary data and control data as far as possible to other Professional Surveyors when requested for the purpose of achieving the above roles.
- 4.4 The Professional Surveyor should act assiduously for his client in a land boundary survey and must remain unbiased in the service even to the extent that the boundary definition may not be favourable to his client.

5. Operational Requirement

5.1 Survey Approach

A Professional Surveyor should plan and design a survey method, conduct the field measurements and collect the data for the determination of the land boundary. The survey principle “*from the whole to part*” should always be applied and a self-checking methodology must be adopted. All fixes of boundary points should be checked independently.

5.2 Search of Information

At the beginning of a land boundary survey, a Professional Surveyor should collect requisite information for the determination of lot boundaries. These include, but not limited to, the boundary evidences contained in land grant and land conveyancing documents and the land boundary plans annexed thereto, assignment plans, old survey sheets, old photographs, engineering drawings, and other relevant land records etc. pertaining to the subject land parcel and its adjoining land parcels. These documentary evidences can be obtained from the land owners, District Survey Offices, Land Registry, the Public Records Office, Government Departments and other relevant public organisations etc. The

information to be collected for a land boundary survey varies from case to case. For example, when a Professional Surveyor is involved in land boundary survey for land resumption or surrender, he may have to obtain road alignment data or planning layout data from the relevant public organisations.

5.3 **Standard Practice for Re-establishment of Lot Boundaries**

To maintain a standard practice for re-establishment of lot boundaries and to ensure the quality of land boundary surveys, Professional Surveyors are required to adopt the practice as stipulated in the COP.

If the Professional Surveyor is also an Authorized Land Surveyor (“ALS”) registered under the Land Survey Ordinance, he has to observe the COP and to take signatory as an ALS in accordance with the provisions in the Ordinance.

The signatory notes recommended to be adopted in field notes, land boundary plans and survey record plans for a Professional Surveyor who is not an ALS are as follows:

Where the certificate in the **field notes** shall be in the following form:

I,, a Professional Grade member registered in Division, The Hong Kong Institute of Surveyors, hereby certify that these field notes, consisting of pages, are a correct and complete record of the observations and measurements made in the field, either by me, or under my immediate direction and supervision.

I also certify that the land boundary survey, of which the field notes form a part, was carried out in conformity with the Code of Practice approved by the Land Survey Authority, and that the survey was completed on theday of 20.....

.....
MHKIS/FHKIS

Where the certificate in the **land boundary plan** shall be in the following form
(when wholly under the supervision or direction of one Professional Surveyor):

I,, a Professional Grade member registered in Division, The Hong Kong Institute of Surveyors, hereby certify that this land boundary plan has been prepared from land boundary surveys that were carried out by me or under my direct supervision in conformity with the Code of Practice approved by the Land Survey Authority, and that this plan correctly represents that survey completed on the day of 20.....

Dated thisday of 20.....

.....
MHKIS/FHKIS

Where the certificate in the **land boundary plan** shall be in the following form
(when partly by or under the supervision or direction of another Professional Surveyor)

I,, a Professional Grade member registered in Division, The Hong Kong Institute of Surveyors, hereby certify that this land boundary plan has been prepared from land boundary surveys that were carried out partly by me or under my direct supervision in conformity with the Code of Practice approved by the Land Survey Authority, and partly by or under the supervision or direction of another Professional Grade member of The Hong Kong Institute of Surveyors, and that this plan correctly represents that survey completed on the day of 20.....

Dated this day of 20.....

.....
MHKIS/FHKIS

Where the certificate in the **survey record plan** shall be in the following form (when wholly under the supervision or direction of one Professional Surveyor):

I,, a Professional Grade member registered in Division, The Hong Kong Institute of Surveyors, hereby certify that this survey record plan has been prepared from land boundary surveys that were carried out by me or under my direct supervision in conformity with the Code of Practice approved by the Land Survey Authority, and that this plan correctly represents that survey completed on the day of 20.....

Dated this day of 20.....

.....
MHKIS/FHKIS

Where the certificate in the **survey record plan** shall be in the following form (when partly by or under the supervision or direction of another Professional Surveyor):

I,, a Professional Grade member registered in Division, The Hong Kong Institute of Surveyors, hereby certify that this survey record plan has been prepared from land boundary surveys that were carried out partly by me or under my direct supervision in conformity with the Code of Practice approved by the Land Survey Authority, and partly by or under the supervision or direction of another Professional Grade member of The Hong Kong Institute of Surveyors, and that this plan correctly represents that survey completed on the day of 20.....

Dated this day of 20.....

.....
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For any survey submitted to the Government bureaux/ departments (“B/Ds”), the Professional Surveyor shall review the appropriateness of adopting the signatory notes in this Guidance Notes in order to tally with the specific requirements that may be imposed by the B/Ds. For the avoidance of doubt, the Professional Surveyors should consult the respective B/D as appropriate.

6. Remarks

- 6.1 Although every care has been taken in preparing these Guidance Notes, The Hong Kong Institute of Surveyors can accept no responsibility for any interpretation of them in relation to any Ordinances or related regulations. Any definition contained in the Guidance Notes can in no way override the definition, which may have to be adopted for the purpose of land boundary survey under any Ordinance. If any doubt arises, members should alert their clients with a view to seeking legal advice.
- 6.2 If members or others wish to comment on the Guidance Notes in any way, they may do so by writing to:-

The Hong Kong Institute of Surveyors
Room 1205, 12/F., Wing On Centre
111 Connaught Road Central
Sheung Wan
Hong Kong

7. References

- 7.1 Latest edition of the Code of Practice approved by the Land Survey Authority under the Land Survey Ordinance (Cap. 473).