

# Collecting, maintaining and providing information

## The collection, collation and quality of the data that is used to create the definitive map of Great Britain is the responsibility of our Data Collection and Management Group.

They collect data for all 243 241 square kilometres of Great Britain and in any year this typically involves surveying activities anywhere between the Shetland Isles and the Scilly Isles. The database contains more than 440 million different topographic features mapped in detail as well as different types of data, including addresses, transport networks and imagery. It is used to provide complete national large-scale digital data right down to building level detail. Approximately 5 000 changes are made every day and are available to our customers through regular updated releases of OS MasterMap and other derived products.

Our production resource includes a 300-strong field surveyor workforce, which is spread across the whole country. We also have a photogrammetric surveying and data enhancement operation based at our Southampton head office. These field and head office operations focus on our high-value and complex datasets. Our operational capability is completed by the addition of a significant private-sector contractor capacity that delivers value by undertaking large volumes of photogrammetric sweep updates in rural and mountainous areas.

Our integrated data capture programme for rural areas was affected by the poor weather experienced across the whole country last year. This reduced the volumes of aerial imagery we were able to capture during 2008–09. We remain confident, however, that over the full 10-year cycle we will be able to provide a service which meets customer needs.

As a result of this continuous attention to detail, our database contains:

- 99.9% of significant real-world features that are greater than six months old. Our Ministerial target for the year was 99.6%.
- 544 713 km of motorable road and over 900 000 route instructions that are updated with some 20 000 changes each month.
- Over 750 000 road names – the three most frequent being High Street, Station Road and Church Lane.
- 27.5 million addresses, which are listed and geographically pinpointed. Around 42 000 changes to this dataset are made every month.

## Looking to the future

In 2009 we upgraded the technology that delivers the OS Net® GPS real-time correction service. New base station receivers now enable this service to broadcast additional corrections for the Russian GLONASS satellites and will also support the future European Galileo constellation. OS Net has become the authoritative high-accuracy positioning service for Great Britain and, in addition to Ordnance Survey's own surveying operations, is widely used by both the private surveying industry and research communities.

The currency of our data is the single most important attribute for our customers. The challenge we have is to maintain this as the whole organisation goes through a period of significant technical change over the next two years. The introduction of our new geo-database technology and the move to a new head office will inevitably impact on our production outputs. To mitigate this, we have brought the currency of the database to a level where it is the best that it has ever been in the 218-year

history of Ordnance Survey. We anticipate that this will reduce the effects of any disruption that may occur during 2010, as we retrain our workforce and move our data to new management systems.

Neil Ackroyd, Director of Data Collection and Management, says: *'Our world-class national mapping is down to the expertise, knowledge, commitment and experience of our workforce. Their detailed local knowledge of the state of development across the whole of Great Britain ensures that we deploy our efficient processes and modern data collection technology to maximum benefit.'*



