

January 2008

To: Lawyers, Surveyors and Title Searchers

Access to Electronic and Paper Documents and Plans

Where a Land Registration Office is 100 percent electronic and the original documents and plans are no longer accessible to Authorized Lawyers, searchers and surveyors on site at the LRO, and where an image online is not readable (less readable than the original record), lawyers, searchers and surveyors will have access to a readable and accurate image **within two days of a request**. Image quality issues will be reported through *Ask POL a Question* and the imaging team will correct and replace the image. If the method to reproduce the image is such that more than two days is required, a copy of the original record will be provided.

Please see the E-Land Registry page for the counties which have had 100% of the records converted.

The process for urgent image replacement requests **does not apply** to situations where the original plans and documents are still on site at the Land Registration Office and accessible for all clients. Many LROs are in the process of converting records to electronic but records are still available for access on site.

Where an LRO has not been converted to 100 percent E-Land Registry, requests for image replacements for sections of the records **which are online** can still be made to *Ask POL a Question*, but because the records are still accessible onsite, the two-day turnaround may not be met due to priorities for “e-access only” requests.

For sections of records in an LRO which have not been loaded in POL (i.e. large format plans or 60 years of documents) requests for images cannot be made; these will be scanned and loaded into POL as per the current plan over the next few years.

The E-Land Registry web page at:

<http://www.gov.ns.ca/snsmr/property/default.asp?mn=282.46.1064.1109> provides up-to-date info on what documents and plans are scanned and online for each county and where clean-up is still being done on some image loads.

Details on Requesting Images of Plans and Documents

For 100 Percent E-land Registries

If there is a plan image or document image online where the detail on the image is not readable due to the scanning process producing an image of lesser quality than the original, and the user requires the detail to complete the transaction or search, the request for an urgent replacement of the image is made through “Ask POL a Question” following the existing procedure. Clients must allow two days for turnaround for these requests as the original plan or document may have to be

retrieved from the off site storage center in order to replace the image.

If the original recorded/registered plan or document is of no better quality than the image online, or is missing the same detail, there is no guarantee that this data can be retrieved and added to the image. As with paper and microfilmed documents and plans today, the document or plan may be worn from repeated handling. We will do our best to replace the plan or document but the time required to do this will likely take much longer than two days.

Q and As:

Q. After paper plans are removed from the LRO, and they are online, how do I access a full scale print of a plan?

The full plot to scale of any online plan can be purchased from any regional office where there is a large format plotter/printer (Halifax, Pictou, Sydney, Bridgewater, and Lawrencetown).

Q. After a vault is closed to clients for searching of paper records, what is the process clients use to request to view the original copy of a plan or document if the image or part of the image they need is unreadable?

The image quality issue is reported through *Ask POL a Question* and will be corrected by the Document Imaging team. If need be, the original be will be requested from off site storage to be re-scanned to replace the current image online.

Q. Will clients be charged a fee for such requests?

There is no fee for the retrieval of an original to be rescanned if the quality of the image online was less than that of the original and prevents the user from completing his/her work. Retrieving the plan from off site storage will be done only if the image cannot be corrected without rescanning the original. In the cases where a paper copy of the original is provided for the client due to the image not being replaced within the two days, there will be no fee for the copy.

Q. How long will it take for the plan or document to be made available?

A client should expect a two-day turnaround if a plan must be retrieved from off site storage to be rescanned or copied. However, many requests are filled well within that time period.

Q. A plan may be colour-coded and online images are black and white, which makes it difficult to identify the area highlighted by color outline.

For many years we have been warning that no colour should be used on documents and plans submitted to the Land Registry. All documents and plans are scanned in black and white and the coloured lines will not be readable in colour. In most cases where a different colour was used to outline an area, the darker line in black and white indicates where the areas are. Often the related interest document that describes the area in metes and bounds is enough to describe/identify the area on the plan. If there is absolutely no way to identify the area on the plan described by

colour, the client can request the original paper plan from the off site storage through *Ask POL a Question* if it is not available on site (the plans that come in daily for registration will be kept on site until they are available on line after they go through the Quality Control process).

Q. What if I need a certified copy of a plan where the original had been colour coded?

The certified copy can only be made in black and white. If there is absolutely no way to identify the area referred to as being outlined in colour/described by colour outline, the client can request the original paper plan from the off site storage through *Ask POL a Question* in order to allow the lawyer/searcher to confirm the colored/outlined area on the original.

The certified copy should be requested from the LRO following the usual process; it will be produced from the online image and certified by the Registrar to be a true copy of the registered document/plan.

Q. Some plans were digitized from microfilm, and the approval stamp may have been on the back of the plan. How will the client retrieve this information?

If the approval date information is not viewable on the image and the plan index does not have this information, the client can request this information and it will be retrieved from document storage; during this process the approval information will be placed in the plan index.

Q. Will the client have to pay an access fee when the only reason for the visit to the Land Registration Office is to obtain a copy of a plan due to the fact that the online image is not readable or partly not readable.

In the unlikely event that an image is not readable and no image “fix” is possible using the original image file, we would retrieve the plan from off site storage and re-scan and replace it online. If the method required to replace the image online creates too much of a time delay, a copy of the original plan may be sent to the client or be left at the LRO for pick-up by the client. If the client was coming to the LRO to pick up a plan only, there would be no access fee.

Q. In Halifax where some of the plans were digitized from microfilm, for some of the microfilmed plans the original microfilming was done at a very slight scale reduction. Does this mean I am not able to get a full scale print-out of the plan from the image?

The full plot to scale of any online plan can be purchased from any regional office where there is a large format plotter/printer (Halifax, Pictou, Sydney, Bridgewater and Lawrencetown). The slight scale reduction is so insignificant that the difference would not be noticeable on a full plan print out.