

# **Transitional arrangements to support the shift to Geocentric Datum of Australia 2020 under the *Mining Act 1978***

Transitional period no longer  
applies after 17 October 2025

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Transitional period no longer applies after 17 October 2025

## Purpose

This document provides guidance to applicants and departmental staff for lodging and managing mining tenement applications during the transition from the Geocentric Datum of Australia 1994 (GDA94) to the Geocentric Datum of Australia 2020 (GDA2020).

It outlines the steps for applicants and departmental staff to:

- Ensure accurate conversion between GDA94 and GDA2020 coordinates.
- Maintain consistency between marking out and lodgement records.
- Minimise administrative errors and legal risks during the transition.
- Support compliance with updated regulations commencing 6 October 2025.

## Background

GDA94 has been Western Australia's official geospatial reference framework under the *Mining Act 1978* since 11 April 2012. Over time, due to natural movement of the Australian tectonic plate, the continent has moved approximately 1.8 metres. This movement causes Australia's coordinates to become misaligned with global navigation satellite systems, such as GPS, unless regularly updated.

To maintain accuracy, the Australian Government implemented a new datum known as GDA2020. GDA2020 replaced GDA94 as the Australia's official standard for measuring on 14 October 2017 through the *National Measurement (Recognised-Value Standard of Measurement of Position) Determination 2017*.

In Western Australia, the *Mines and Petroleum Regulations Amendment (Geocentric Datum) Regulations 2025* came into effect from **Friday 3 October 2025**. This was earlier than previously communicated.

The introduction of GDA2020 will not change the physical area or boundaries of already granted tenements. Instead, the coordinates of those tenements will be automatically converted from GDA94 to GDA2020, within in DMPE's geospatial systems.

## Policy

From commencement of the Regulations (3 October 2025) marking-out and lodgement must align with GDA2020. This change ensures that spatial data for tenement boundaries is consistent and accurate across Western Australia and aligns with national geodetic standards.

## Transitional period

A transition period is acknowledged and planned for where it is expected that some applicants will mark out their tenement using GDA94 coordinates before midnight on 3 October 2025 and lodge their application on or after 3 October 2025, when GDA2020 is the required datum.

This transitional period will be in effect from commencement until 17 October 2025.

This will result in different numbers appearing on the Form 20 (Marking Out), recorded in GDA94, and the Form 21 (Application), which must be submitted in GDA2020.

In addition, some supporting documents (such as maps, statements and mineralisation reports) may have been prepared pre-transition in GDA94 and accompany a post-commencement application.

Both the Form 20 and Form 21 mismatch described above, and any supporting documents prepared in GDA94 will be accepted during the transition period provided that:

- The difference between the GDA94 and GDA2020 values matches the known datum shift.
- The physical pegged area on the ground is unchanged.

**Applicants are advised to lodge a copy of the Form 20 with the application.**

The department will not reject applications solely because the coordinates on Form 20 and Form 21 or supporting documents do not exactly match, provided these were prepared under the applicable framework in place at the time they were made.

## **How DMPE will deal with applications during the transition period**

When assessing applications lodged during the transition period DMPE will:

1. Verify any conversion
  - Use the department's coordinate conversion tool (within Tengraph) or approved GIS system to confirm the conversion between GDA94 and GDA2020.
  - A difference of ~1.8 m is expected and acceptable.
2. Record the verification
  - Note in the system that the variation is due to the GDA2020 transition.
  - Retain a copy of both the original (GDA94) and converted (GDA2020) coordinates.
3. Escalate unusual cases
  - If the discrepancy exceeds 1.8 m or there is concern about accuracy the application will be escalated internally for review.

## **Rules post the transition period**

From 18 October 2025 onwards:

- All application materials (forms and supporting documents) must be entirely in GDA2020.
- Any applications using GDA94 after this date will be invalid and rejected.