

## Future Direction of the Geomatics Profession in Sri Lanka

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Customarily, the role of the land surveyor was to collect spatial information pertaining to a land parcel including its boundaries, extents, nature and its ownership. However, in recent times, it has developed to a status of a managerial role. It also encompasses various other professions including; valuation, disaster management, agriculture, transportation, environmental monitoring, crime scene investigation to plastic surgeries. Therefore, the profession of land surveying has been rebooted through the recent decades by the rising demands for construction and the changes in the industry requirements, which have created new challenges and opened new opportunities. Various trends in the surveying profession have emerged globally during the last two decades. In today's world, the profession remains in existence by addressing the future needs of the community. Most of the international professional associations have redefined their professional competencies from time to time in accordance with the development and demand of the industry. However, the adaptation and response to those changes by most local associations and communities in developing countries are minimal. Therefore, it is beneficial to examine these career trajectories within the surveying profession in relation to Sri Lanka to provide directions for its positive impact on the industry. This study is mainly based on the in-depth interviews and questionnaire survey with selected surveyors, educators, business professionals and government authorities. Over 140 responses were collected. Here, four career paths were identified including Geomatics, Geoinformatics, Hydrography, and Construction as future trajectories in the profession. However, to become a professional surveyor, one should have a general understanding of all of the above paths. In future, more and more automated measurement techniques such as laser scanners, drone surveys, and advanced GNSS will gradually overtake the conventional survey techniques. But, the opportunities for continuing professional development (CPD) courses on those aspects are limited. Finally it is strongly stressed that the professional institution, practitioners and academia must work collaboratively to uplift the profession in Sri Lanka.

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