

FIELD DATA COLLECTION

PURPOSE OF FIELD NOTES

Field notes are the record of work done in the field. They consist of lengths, angles, areas, sketches, descriptions, and other data. They may be taken by hand, or can be computer-generated.

THE IMPORTANCE OF GOOD FIELD NOTES

- **PERMANENT RECORDS** Surveying field notes, whether in books or on electronic data recorders, are the only permanent record of work done in the field.
- **TIME** If they are lost, incorrect, damaged or incomplete, much of the time and money invested in making accurate records has been wasted!
- **MONEY** Field books contain data which has been collected over weeks or months. The cost of collecting this data can range in the thousands of dollars.
- **LITIGATION** Property surveys are subject to court review. The status of the field book can be a very important factor in litigation.
- **EFFICIENCY** The information in the field book is used by office personnel to make drawings or calculations. Complete and correct notes are essential.

BASIC REQUIREMENTS FOR GOOD NOTES

- **ACCURACY** By far the most important aspect of field notes.
- **INTEGRITY - (Complete)** If the field crew fail to collect all important data, costly delays can occur in the office.
- **LEGIBILITY** Major errors can occur if your notes can't be easily read.
- **ARRANGEMENT** Following a standard note format, save time and money when trying to follow notes.
- **CLARITY** A well planned survey with clear special notations and sketches will greatly add to the understanding of the survey.

TYPES OF NOTES

- **TABULATIONS**
Table of data, for differential leveling or profile leveling, taping or traverse data, etc.
- **DESCRIPTIONS**
Information about area, benchmarks, turning points, weather, survey party, etc.
- **DIAGRAMS**
Sketch of the area, noting landmarks, roads and buildings, benchmarks, angles, and distances

IMPORTANT POINTS TO REMEMBER ABOUT NOTES

- Always give the project name, location, and date. You can document and correlate surveys by time.

- Indicate the weather conditions. Weather can point out errors made by the survey party, and errors due to poor visibility or high reflection, expansion by heat, or high wind.
Temperature.
Wind direction.
Wind speed.
Atmosphere.
- List the members of the crew on the survey and their duties. Party members are listed for documentation and future reference.
- Note the instruments used, their model and serial number. The instrument number is listed for documentation and to note accuracy, and for future reference if instrument errors are later discovered.

IMPORTANT POINTS TO REMEMBER ABOUT NOTES

- Use the Reinhardt system of lettering. Reinhardt lettering is used in drafting and engineering lettering, and is used for clarity and simplicity.
- Avoid crowding - Paper is cheap. Field books are assumed to be original. If a copy is made, the copy must be so marked, and is not admissible in court. Original notes are those taken in field with measurements.
- Put down what you read, do not selectively edit data in the field. Do not do calculations in your head; write them out for future reference.
- Write all notes in notebook, not on other paper for later transfer.
- NEVER erase recorded data on the data page. Erasures look like improper modifications have been made. If an error occurs, draw a single line through the improper part while allowing it to remain legible. VOID large areas if needed.
- There is less of a problem with erasures on the description, calculation, and sketch pages.
- Check your data for correctness before you leave the field. It is much easier to correct mistakes while at the site.