

Engaging Primary School Students (and Their Parents) with Surveying

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SUMMARY

Surveying is plagued by a notorious skills shortage and continuing problems to attract enough tertiary students to feed demand. Promotion of the profession to school aged students provides surveying exposure to a wide audience and helps develop a pipeline of future surveyors. This paper presents an initiative to engage primary school students (and their parents) with surveying in a way that is both educational and fun, while also promoting community engagement and delivering real-world benefits to the surveying profession. Students were asked to take their parents or carers for a walk along the footpaths in their local neighbourhood and find State Survey Marks (SSMs) located along the kerb, investigate the mark's health status and take photographs of the mark and its surroundings. This resulted in 275 survey marks being spotted and photographed, with associated metadata then updated on public record, contributing to the maintenance of the survey control network in New South Wales, Australia. This 'SSM spotting' activity can easily be adapted to cater for high school or tertiary students and has the potential to target citizen science or fundraising activities. It is hoped that this will help in the quest to educate the general public about what surveyors do, raise the profession's profile and result in more people choosing a career as a surveyor or geospatial professional.