



*Information Management Branch manager Colin Pearce believes in 'down with the old, up with the new'. Here, he has just removed last year's Silver Award to make way for this year's Gold Award, held by acting database administrator Steve Jones. Photo by Verna Costello*

# GIS wins Gold this time

By Colin Pearce

At the end of March, CALM received its second WA Land Information System (WALIS) award in three years for compilation of metadata.

The Department received the Silver Award in 1997, and this year received the State's Gold Award.

Metadata is a term used for data that describes other data—in other words it is information that contains details such as the origin, format, specifications, ownership,

physical location, accessibility and so on, of a specified set of data.

The availability of up-to-date and detailed metadata is essential if the data is to be used properly. For example, maps depicting forest types can only be interpreted and used correctly if this is done in conjunction with the relevant metadata, which would include a definition of the types, the date of

compilation, and the precision and source of the data.

For geographically related data, highly detailed metadata standards, (known as Australia and New Zealand Land Information Council standards) have been adopted throughout State government agencies, including CALM.

Because of CALM's many and varied activities, the department has an enormous range of spatial data, held in an equally

wide range of locations. This year's Gold Award to CALM was made in recognition of the achievement by the Geographic Information Section (GIS) in collecting and compiling metadata from such diverse and geographically dispersed sources.

The metadata collected so far has been made available for the WALIS 'Interragator' CD, and will eventually be placed on CALMWeb, making it accessible throughout the Department.

## Careful! Photographs are fragile

An increasing number of photographic prints have been arriving for use in *CALM NEWS* and other publications with their surfaces ruined by ink marks.

This is because those

sending them in have written a caption on the reverse, turned them over and placed the back on the front of another print. Occasionally, we have been able to crop out these marks, but when they

appear across the subject of the photo, they cannot be used.

Even when the ink seems to be dry, wet or humid weather, or accidental spills while in transit can still have a

damaging effect. To be absolutely sure that prints arrive in good condition, it is a good idea to place a piece of paper between them, and cardboard around them for protection from bending or piercing.

