

Data Library Guide: Abacus GIS Data

Using Abacus to Find Geospatial Data

The goal of this exercise is to get you familiar with using Abacus to find geospatial data. For this example, you will use Abacus to find DMTI data for BC, along with instructions on how to get ICIS and TRIM data.

1. Let's start by going to Abacus. Go to <http://www.library.ubc.ca>. Click on the **Indexes & Databases** and search for "Abacus". Click on **Abacus** in the results list. You should be prompted to login with your CWL.
2. First you can browse the data. Under **UBC Library Data Services**, expand the **Licensed data (login required)** category. Next expand the **Geospatial (GIS)** category. Now if you click on either **Geospatial(GIS)** or one of its subcategories, the list on the right will only show you geospatial datasets that fall within that category. The public data category (below licensed) also has a geospatial category you can explore.
3. You can also search the repository for specific datasets. For example, search for "DMTI". From the **Sort By** drop-down menu, select **Production Date**. Find **CanMap RouteLogistics, v2014.3** in the results list and click on its title.
4. The first page you see (the **Cataloguing Information** tab) gives you important information about the dataset. To download the data, go to the **Data & Analysis** tab. Click on **Download** next to the BC.zip file to download the BC data. You'll have to **agree** to the terms of use and click on **Continue** to download the file. Save the zip file in C:\Temp (or another folder where you can find it) and **extract** it. *Note: Geospatial data often comes in a zip file as it is made up of a collection of files. You'll need to unzip it before you can use it in ArcMap. To do so in the computer lab, go to the folder where you saved the file and right click on the zip file. Select **PeaZip** and then **Extract here**.*
5. You should see a newly created folder called **BC**. In there are a number of useful shapefiles for BC. For example, if you go into that folder, and again into the **Streets** folder you should see a file called **BCrte.shp**. That file contains BC roads and other routes that you could add to a map. Go back to the record in Abacus to download the documentation and learn more about this dataset.
6. Next, let's find ICIS data in Abacus. ICIS is an organization that attempts to collect and normalize data from various municipalities in BC. The main datasets available are data on cadastres (land parcels) and BC assessment property boundaries. ICIS also provides a point layer on addresses in BC and other useful data, such as health care facilities or police jurisdictions. You can read more on the **Cataloguing Information** tab of the ICIS record.
7. Click on **UBC Library Data Services Dataverse** at the top of the DMTI record to go back to the main search screen. This time search for "ICIS". There should only be 1 result – click on its title.
8. Go to the **Data & Analysis** tab. Click on **Download** next to the UBC_ICIS_Order.txt file. You'll have to **agree** to the terms of use and click on **Continue** to download the file. Open the file up in a text editor, such as Wordpad, to read the instructions on how to get the data. The instructions will

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mention that you should specify which files you want. You can find the complete file list by downloading and reading the file ICIS_File_Manifest.txt in the record.

9. Finally, let's find TRIM data in Abacus. TRIM data is from the provincial government of BC. It contains two geospatial data sets – one set is called TRIM DEM and has shapefiles for elevation points and breaklines. You would use this data to create your own elevation or surface models. The second set is called TRIM Positional and includes various layers for contours, cultural features, landcover, transportation and water. Both sets are for a scale of 1:20,000.
10. Click on **UBC Library Data Services Dataverse** at the top of the ICIS record to go back to the main search screen. This time search for "TRIM". Click on the title of the first result, **Terrain Resource Information Management Program - (TRIM)**.
11. Go to the **Data & Analysis** tab. Click on **Download** next to the UBC_TRIM_Order.txt file. You'll have to **agree** to the terms of use and click on **Continue** to download the file. Open the file up in a text editor, such as Wordpad, to read the instructions on how to get the data. The instructions will mention that you should specify which BCGS map regions you want. To figure out which BCGS map regions your area falls into, you can use the finding aid in the record.
12. Click on **Download** next to the 1_to_20K_BCGS.kml file. Again, you'll have to **agree** to the terms of use and click on **Continue** to download the file. Open the KML file up in Google Earth. Use the search bar on the top left to search for the region you want (For example, try searching for "Williams Lake, BC").
13. The map should zoom into your region and there should be a grid of squares covering it. Click on the square(s) covering your region to see the BCGS map region ID, such as 93B.020. That is what you'll need to request the data.
14. You also need to specify which type you want, TRIM DEM and/or TRIM Positional, as described above.

For any assistance with Abacus, contact myself (see contact info below) or our Data/GIS Analyst, Paul Lesack (paul.lesack@ubc.ca).