

2020

Accident Specialist 21-years, Case History 1999 -2020, With Google Earth Visual



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Like any business practice, keeping track of cases or instructions received is and should not be a difficult task. This is typically undertaken with the use of Microsoft Excel or some database system. Records are usually kept with reference to the day, month, year and perhaps a code or name of the client or the staff member dealing with the matter. With Accident Specialist (AS), the same applies, an Excel spreadsheet performing the ongoing task.

Notably, there are various software or case-flow management programs, N.I.C.E, Nyuix investigate, i-Sight, Aims.world and many others that are available. Dependant on the nature of your practice, be that private or government and that there may be certain specific requirements, or perhaps a limited start-up budget, there are many options. By example, some of the data recorded in the AS database is as follows:

Year / Date:	Our Ref. No.:	Instructing client:	Insured / Claimant name:	Clients Ref. No.:	Date received:	Location:	GPS Co-Ords.:	Specialist:	Date sent:
Key issues considered:		Video Footage (IVM / Other):		Invoice No.:	Testified:	Outcome:			

Taking a look back at the start of the practice in 1999 as a sole proprietor and subsequently as a fully-fledged Closed Corporation in 2000, every record held provides an interesting oversight as to the development. The nature of the practice, sees a range of time spent on each matter, perhaps from a single day, to a full week and often longer, this therefore limits the number of cases that can be handled. There are obviously many factors that would affect the capable work load, such as the nature of the case, administration staff and further in house specialist staff. Nonetheless, consideration over the years provides an excellent source of analysis and would be of particular interest to a start-up practice, especially where access to such records and numbers is rarely disclosed by a practice. Such figures, along with other company data, also provides excellent review in respect of short medium and long term streamlining, operational monitoring and a host of other related management issues.

Rather unfortunately, during 2006, an aggressive ransomware issue saw the loss of a large number of files, to include the case record recording database. With backup systems, a percentage of the electronic cases were recovered, nonetheless 2001 through 2005 not accurately available. Assuming working hours at thirty five (35) hours per week, four (4) weeks a month for twelve (12) months, provides the following analysis:

Historical years case numbers 1999 - 2020 (June)			
Year	Number of cases per year	Averg. P/M	Approx. No. of hours P/M
1999	75	6.25	22.4 hrs Per Case
2000	201	16.75	8.35
2001			
2002			
2003			
2004			
2005			
2006	80	6.58	21.27
2007	85	7.08	19.77
2008	79	6.58	21.27
2009	129	10.75	13.02
2010	119	9.91	14.12
2011	121	10.08	13.88
2012	152	12.66	11.05
2013	127	10.58	13.23
2014	160	13.33	10.50
2015	159	13.25	10.56
2016	166	13.83	10.12
2017	153	12.75	10.98
2018	241	20.08	6.97*
2019	242	20.16	6.94*
2020	150	12.5	11.20

*Further specialist joined the practice

It is of particular interest to note that the number of hours per case generally decreasing as the number of cases increases, a typical correlation. This noted, the number of hours spent per case is certainly not a true reflection, where certain cases definitely consume vast hours.

Through the early 2000`s, AS started making regular use of GPS location plotting with Google Earth¹ (GE). During 2008, almost all cases attended began the process of geolocation. At this early stage, the primary function being that of locating travel distances from office (Durban KwaZulu Natal – East Coast) and where possible facilitating viewing of the case site in analysis of the case. An example of the extent of operation from 2008, in respect of case geolocating is evident:

*Country and surrounding SADC locations - 722



*Based in Durban, KwaZulu Natal – East Coast sees the primary area of operation



In essence, both the Excel spreadsheet with the multiple points of data entry per case and the separate yet associated geolocating (GE), forms a substantial and usable database in many different respects.

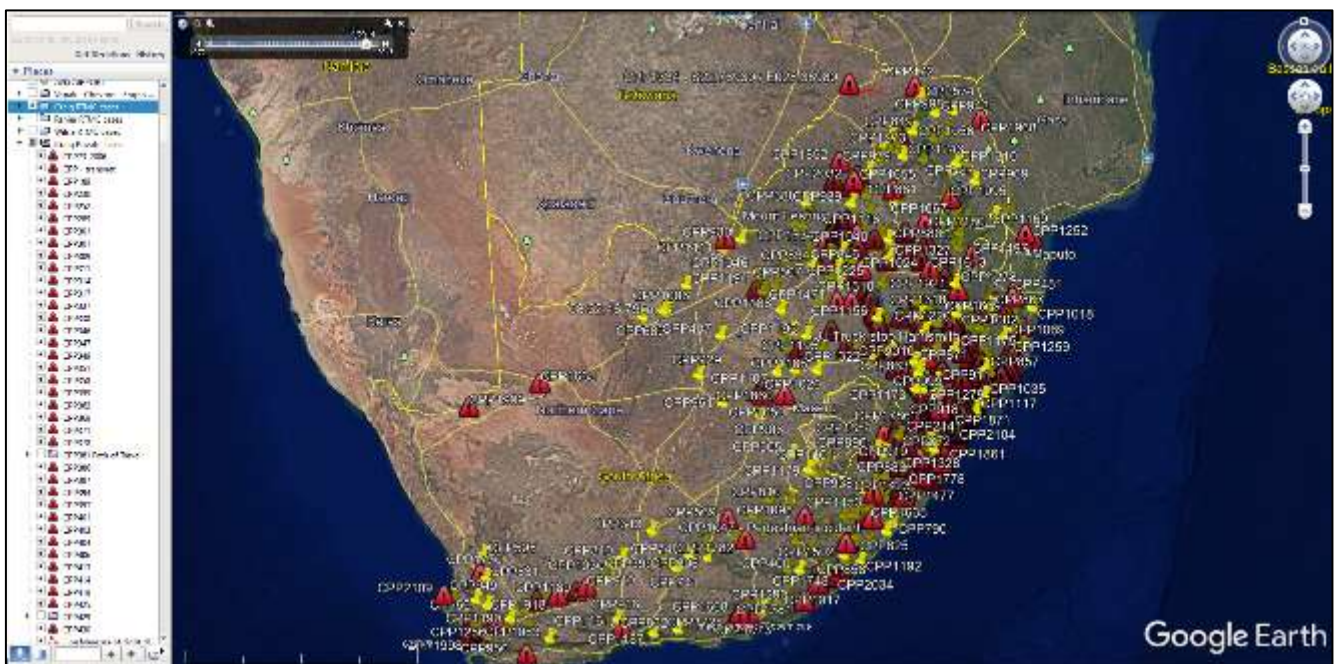
¹ Google Earth operation from June 11, 2001; <https://www.google.com/earth/> - https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Google_Earth

During 2009 through 2016, a major contract to a specific client, provided for the same process of Excel spreadsheet record keeping. Likewise, the geolocation for every case appointed to that specific client created for a specific or overlaid Google Earth database, as is evident:

*Specific client case locations plotted (Yellow pins) - 388

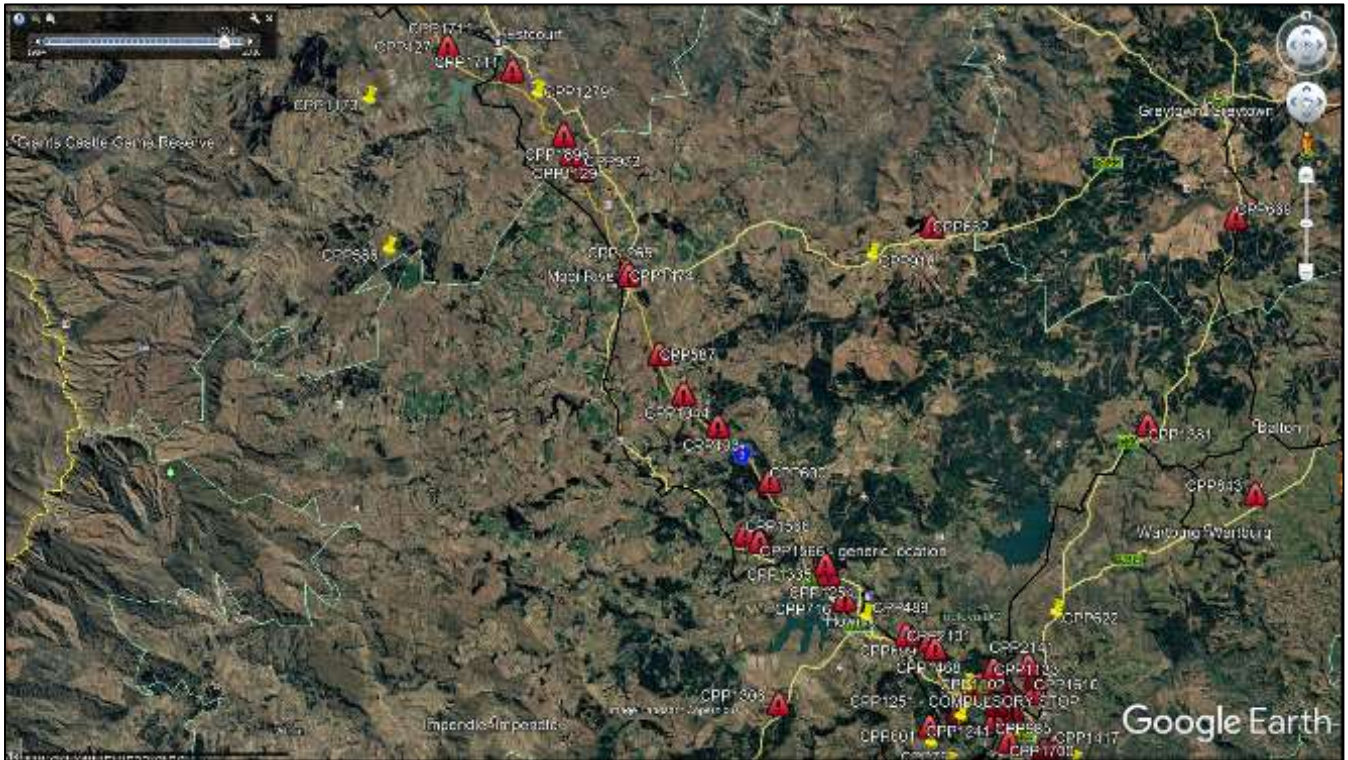


*AS general client database (Red), overlaid with specific client database (Yellow pins) (722 / 388)



An interesting and rather appealing product of geolocating in this manner is the ability to simply switch on (off), and zoom-in to an area that needs to be considered and the relevant cases are immediately evident by reference. Likewise, the impactful graphical output of the hotspot locations, against the usual analytical charts, graphs and prose descriptions provides great visual impetus. This clearly understandable graphic output reaches a far greater spectrum of the audience during presentation, as is evident.

*A particular route (N3) that shows a concentration of cases



*A particular route (N1) that shows a concentration of cases



With the potential of the database clearly evident, not only in the process of recording and monitoring the in house case flow, however with contribution to an analytical road safety database, we are in the process of expanding the database. With the specific use of GE, we have included, with their approval and desensitised records, two other specialist practitioner's data, with the database now reflecting an empirical record of some 1628 locations, this evident:

As a further pro-active measure, we have now included a further twenty two (22) specific fields of data on GE, that are all data sets specifically collated and managed by AS. These data sets allow AS the specific consideration of a range of analysis services specifically afforded to clients in respect of issues of route analysis, overall road safety, case analysis and other key concern issues.



In time, with the natural growth and inclusion of further cases and perhaps the inclusion of case records sourced from further practitioners in the road safety realm and other database resources collated, the database will certainly grow and allow analysis well beyond the already impressive considerations currently available.

It is well known that there is power in data, however accuracy thereof is always key. As is evident, the basic requirement of recording and monitoring standard cases worked in daily practice, certainly provides a multitude of alternative opportunities over time, especially where the nature of the data collected is essentially factual, empirical data.

We continue in practice and likewise to maintaining the basic case flow recording Excel spreadsheet. It is now database that spans more than 20 years, the detail content thereof having grown. We continue to maintain the geolocating of the vast majority of cases handled, with the use of Google Earth. We are in the process of compiling a research piece on the data.

We hope that providing this brief insight to a somewhat unusual and alternative angle to the usual cases analysis main stream function of the business, highlights not only the actual simplicity of standard practice daily case records, however the extent to which such records can evolve to benefit yourself and others.

Feel free to get in contact with us if you feel you can contribute, or perhaps would like to consider co-operative access to the database.

Safe travels