

THE AUTOMOBILE ASSOCIATION OF GREAT BRITAIN - ITS
INTERNATIONAL ACTIVITIES AND RELATIONSHIPS IN
CARTOGRAPHIC PUBLISHING IN ALL ITS FORMS

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The Automobile Association of Great Britain is one of the largest motoring organisations in the world with 8 million members. It is not only a Club for emergencies and breakdowns but a mutual members' society with extremely diverse activities.

The Association has an annual turnover of £650 million. The superlatives abound when considering this organisation, particularly when examining its publishing activities. AA Publishing is a major international publisher, specialising in maps, guides and atlases. The ubiquitous AA Essential Guides were published in 25 different languages in 1993. AA Publishing counts itself as the leading road atlas publisher in Great Britain, selling over 2.2 million road atlases last year.

For a number of years, European titles have been published and the AA Cartography Department owns and maintains a European database which is used for the production of paper maps and atlases and digital products.

The Department has been involved in electronic publishing for nine years. Its European database is used in several European countries and by Volvo's DynaGuide for the purpose of displaying real time road and traffic conditions in the countries of the Benelux - "Cartography crossing borders" on the move and in real time.

This paper describes the international activities of AA cartography, its relationships with its sister clubs in the Alliance Internationale de Tourisme and ARC Transistance, its commercial relationships with companies in France, Spain, Italy, The Netherlands and its fledgling attempts at collusion with Eastern Europe.