

## **INQUIRY INTO SKILLS SHORTAGES IN RURAL AND REGIONAL NSW**

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**Theme:**

**Summary**

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5<sup>th</sup> August 2005

The Hon Tony Catanzariti MLC  
Committee Chair  
Standing Committee on State Development  
Legislative Council  
Parliament House  
Sydney NSW 2000

Dear Mr Catanzariti,

**RE: SKILLS SHORTAGES IN RURAL AND REGIONAL NSW**

The Planning Institute of Australia (PIA) NSW Division welcomes the establishment of the Inquiry into Skills Shortages in Rural and Regional NSW, being undertaken by the New South Wales Standing Committee on State Development.

PIA is the peak professional body representing professions involved in planning Australia's cities, towns, regions and places.

Please find enclosed PIA NSW's submission to the Inquiry. We trust that the inquiry will give due consideration to the points we have raised.

PIA NSW would be pleased to appear at the Public Hearings of the Inquiry during the Sydney sessions to further explain the current situation in relation to skills shortages in the planning profession and to explore ways in which these shortages might be addressed within the broader context of rural and regional skills shortages.

I can be contacted via the PIA NSW office on 02 9280 2121 or mobile 0418 695 431.

Yours faithfully



Monique Roser  
President  
PIA NSW Division



**NSW Standing Committee on State Development**

**Inquiry into Skills Shortages in Rural and Regional  
NSW**

**Submission by the Planning Institute of Australia  
(NSW Division)**

**August 2005**

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## 1. Introduction

The Planning Institute of Australia (PIA) is the peak professional body representing professions involved in planning Australia's cities, towns, regions and places. PIA is a not-for-profit association delivering benefits to over 4,000 members nationally. Our members are drawn from a range of planning professions – urban and regional planning, social planning, urban design, environmental planning, economic development planning, transport planning and planning law.

The shared core interest of PIA, as stated in its Constitution is:

*“the community, and the education, research and practices relating to the planned use of land, its associated systems, and of the natural and built environmental, social and economic impacts and implications of the use of land”.*

The following submission is lodged on behalf of the NSW Division of the PIA and addresses issues relating to the planning profession in rural and regional NSW.

It is understood that the Committee will inquire into and report on issues relating to skills shortages in rural and regional NSW. Planning is not alone as a professional area facing serious challenges in this area. The Planning Institute recognises that solutions to the skills shortages require both generic responses, but also industry-specific responses. This framework will be vital to effective, ongoing solutions.

As stated in the call for submissions, the inquiry will examine:

1. The current and future demand for labour;
2. The economic and social impact of the skills shortage;
3. Strategies and programs of local governments to retain and attract skilled workers;
4. Appropriate models from other states in interacting with the Commonwealth's skilled regional migration programs;
5. Coordination between Local, State and Commonwealth Governments to attract and retain skilled workers;
6. The impact of the Commonwealth's regional migration programs;
7. The adequacy of current measures used to record and report on the skills shortage; and
8. The methods used by training organisations including TAFE to assess skills needs in rural and regional NSW and their response to identified needs.

This submission responds to items 1, 2, 3 and 5, with a particular focus on the shortage of planning professionals in rural and regional NSW.

## 2. Background

The shortage of planners throughout Australia is one of the most significant issues facing the planning profession. This labour market shortage is now critical in the major cities, however it has been and continues to be a critical long term problem in the rural and regional areas of the state. It is particularly difficult to recruit and retain qualified planners in rural and regional areas of NSW, as it is for many professions. Within the context of a national skills shortage in the profession, the problem is even more acute.

During 2003 and 2004, PIA undertook a National Inquiry into planning education and employment. The Inquiry responded to serious concerns about the shortage of planners, their workplace environments and their professional training. The Inquiry was initiated in the wake of increased development activity bringing unprecedented demands on the planning profession. Funded by state and territory governments, the Inquiry acknowledged the vital role that the planning profession has in ensuring the efficient and effective operation of our cities and towns.

The Inquiry undertook the following activities:

- Call for submissions (45 received);
- National survey of planning employers (191 responses);
- Workshops held in most states and territories (140 attendees); and
- Survey of young planners (34 responses).

A copy of the final report of the Inquiry is attached. It can also be found at [www.planning.org.au](http://www.planning.org.au).

### **3. Difficulty in recruiting and retaining planning staff in rural and regional NSW**

Employers throughout rural and regional NSW experience great difficulty in both recruiting and retaining planning staff. Reasons for this include:

- The general shortage of planners in NSW;
- Lack of appropriate skills among the population;
- Low levels of entry of students from rural and regional areas to undertake undergraduate programs at university, due to low levels of awareness about planning as a career and the costs for families in supporting university education, particularly where it involves relocation;
- Many planners are reluctant to relocate to rural and regional areas due to lifestyle changes involved, which means that response to job advertisements in these areas is poor;
- Higher salaries are paid in the cities;
- High work loads, complexity of work, and diversity of skills required;
- Difficulty in keeping up to date with planning legislation changes and ever-changing requirements of planners, without the ability to draw on a nearby peer group;
- Limited resources available to rural and regional planners who are often dealing with large-scale issues such as major projects, environmental management, resource development and economic plans;
- Availability of suitable training courses both in regional areas, and in metropolitan areas that are relevant to regional and rural needs;
- Costs involved with training courses eg travel, accommodation; and
- Organising time away from the office to complete courses, in particular given the additional travel times.

All of these issues contribute to very high stress levels in the work place, for which the planning profession is infamous. This "toxic" environment accounts for a high proportion of planners leaving the industry or moving to related fields. A number of planners also take overseas postings. In addition, the profession also loses a significant proportion of female planners over the age of 35, largely due to family commitments.

## **4. Current and future demand for labour**

### **4.1 Current demand for planners**

Most cities and their regions and "sea-change" communities are suffering a critical shortage of planners.

Figures from the Inquiry indicate a planner vacancy rate of 13 – 19% over the past three years. At the time of the survey, NSW accounted for 33% of all vacancies amongst the respondents, representing 82 unfilled positions.

Rural and regional areas suffer from a long-term shortage of planners. They find it difficult to recruit and retain planning staff. Although the Inquiry did not obtain firm data there is anecdotal evidence that the coastal “sea change” communities undergoing unprecedented development are also experiencing problems attracting planners.

The shortage of planners in rural and regional areas mirrors the problems faced by other professional groups (such as doctors and teachers). This shortage is a long-term problem with no clear short term solutions. The problem is being exacerbated by more recent shortages of planners in the larger metropolitan areas, competition from other industries for planners' skills and the higher salaries and conditions that can be offered in the cities.

A survey of Victorian rural and regional local governments (undertaken by the PIA Victorian Division) indicated a vacancy rate of 18%, almost 3% more than the vacancy rate in urban areas of Victoria (15.2%). A similar trend is seen in NSW, with rural and regional areas experiencing higher vacancy levels than urban areas. Indeed, given the comparatively larger size of NSW and relative remoteness of rural and regional areas from major service centres, it is likely that the trend would be more pronounced in NSW.

Local government, as the largest employer of planners, faces the biggest challenge with recruiting and retaining planners. Local government employs 47% of the total number of planners across Australia, the private sector 30% and state/territory government 22%. Whilst local government employs almost half the planners, they are experiencing the greatest problem with staff shortages, representing almost 80% of total vacancies.

The results of the Inquiry's survey and other surveys undertaken indicate that planning employers have the greatest problem in recruiting and retaining experienced planners (10 or more years experience), particularly with skills in development assessment. The shortage of experienced planners is due to:

- Experienced planners leaving traditional planning areas to work in related areas (such as natural resource management, transport or social planning);
- Experienced planners leaving the profession because of “burn-out” or morale issues;
- Female planners over 35 years of age leaving the profession due to family commitments or other reasons and many choosing to work part-time (1 in 4 female planners work part-time); and
- Planners moving out of the technical area and into managerial positions being created to deal with new planning legislation or increased work loads.

## **4.2 Future demand for planners**

The survey of planning employers undertaken for the Inquiry found that 63% of organisations surveyed will be employing more planners in 5-10 years time, 33% will stay the same and only 2.8% say their demand will decrease. There was a higher representation of planning consultancies amongst the organisations requiring additional planners.

The 113 organisations which will be increasing the number of planners they employ, will be requiring a total of 360 additional planners or a 28% increase from the current numbers, in the next 5–10 years. For rural and regional local governments this figure is even higher.

Based on findings of the Inquiry there will be a steady increase in demand for planners in NSW over the next 5 - 10 years, with an anticipated 529 positions being created. (See Table 1).

**Table 1: Planner Shortage in NSW**

	No. of planners <sup>1</sup>	Potential vacancies <sup>2</sup>	No. of new planning positions in 5-10 years <sup>3</sup>
NSW	1890	302	529

<sup>1</sup> 2001 Census

<sup>2</sup> Based on questionnaire findings of 16% average vacancy rate over the last 3 years

<sup>3</sup> Based on questionnaire findings of 28% increase in planning positions over the next 5-10 years

(Source: PIA Inquiry 2004, page 23, Table 11)

While these figures relate to the whole of NSW, based on the results of the Victorian survey, along with anecdotal evidence from discussions with rural and regional planning employers, it would be expected that a considerable proportion of new planning positions will be in the rural and regional areas.

## 5. Economic and social impact of the skills shortage

Skills shortages can have broad economic and social impacts on rural and regional areas. The survival and growth of our rural and regional towns is dependent on the availability and utilisation of resources, including skills.

Planning strategies for rural and regional areas can lead to better outcomes for a community and the environment, as well as better use of resources. The planning process fosters greater co-operation and co-ordination of service delivery agencies, engages the public in debate and provides certainty for the private sector. Studies have also demonstrated the economic benefits that planning provides.

As our urban systems become more complex, planners will be in demand to play an increasing role in managing these changes. Skilled professionals who can address these issues and advise governments and the community, are critical to the successful delivery of economic vitality, environmental enhancement, and community well being.

Planners in rural and regional Australia are often involved with large scale planning issues, undertaking non-traditional planning tasks and going beyond town boundaries. They perform important roles in their communities such as regional economic development, natural resource planning and environmental management. As such, a shortage of planners in rural and regional NSW can have significant economic, social and environmental impacts.

In general, the shortage of planners in rural and regional NSW results in:

- Delays in assessing development proposals, which can hinder or even deter economic development and slow growth;
- Inadequate resolution of major issues and concerns with development applications, due to lack of skilled staff with expertise in specialist areas;
- Inability to undertake strategic planning projects to guide development and growth in a sustainable manner;
- Inability to fully implement some policies, such as native vegetation and catchment management; and
- Local Governments having to pay consultants (often based outside the region) large amounts of money to do planning work.

## 6. Strategies and programs to attract and retain skilled workers

A range of responses have been proposed to better use existing resources and encourage young and experienced planners out of the cities, including:



- Pooling planning resources and using private consultants.
- Training local people to take on planning administration tasks (such as the Certificate IV Course in Local Government (Planning)).
- Planning scholarships for rural and regional students.
- Promoting the benefits of working in rural and regional communities.
- Some form of bonding in return for financial support to work in rural and remote councils.

Suggestions for retaining planners already in rural and regional areas (particularly younger people) is to have more accessible ongoing professional training such as courses on-line.

Some specific examples of strategies and programs in NSW and other states are outlined below.

#### *Scholarships for rural students*

A number of New South Wales rural councils offer small scholarships to school leavers in their communities, to pay for accommodation and study expenses whilst studying planning at the University of New England. Students receive a small scholarship (in the order of \$2,500 per year for two years) from the Councils, and in return students spend six weeks each year with the Council gaining work experience.

Martin Auster, Program Co-ordinator for Urban and Regional Planning at the University said “that these scholarships have been successful in keeping locally trained planners in their communities. Planners who come from the rural areas are more likely to be attracted to work in these areas, than city based planners. These scholarships provide the incentive for high school students to take up planning studies and many Councils offer planning work for the students during the vacation breaks and ongoing work after graduation.”

#### *Sharing resources in rural councils*

In 1995 the Avondale Hotham Regional Planning Group, comprised of six wheat belt local councils in WA, near Perth, commenced a highly successful program to share planning resources. In 2000 the workload became too great and the arrangement discontinued. However, Brookton and Beverley Shire Councils, members of the regional planning group, continue to share planning resources and the cost is apportioned on the basis of workload. Russell Reid the relieving Shire Planner said the “sharing works well and is the best use of scarce planning resources.” The councils in this regional group not only share planning resources but other Council functions such as Environmental Health Officer and Building Surveyor.

#### *Cadetships*

The City of Salisbury in Adelaide offers a 12 month Cadet Development Officer position for planning students in their 3rd year or higher of a Bachelor in Urban and Regional Planning or Graduate Diploma or Masters Degree. The Cadetship provides flexible working hours based on study commitments. Whilst a permanent position is not guaranteed at the end of the tenure, the Cadet is well placed to apply for such a position.

## **7. Coordination between all levels of government to attract and retain skilled workers**

The Inquiry's recommendations have implications for the Australian Government, state and territory planning departments and agencies, local governments, universities, private sector employers and the PIA.

The Inquiry urges the Australian Government, state and territory planning departments, local governments, universities, private sector employers and the Planning Institute of Australia to work together to implement the required changes. These agencies all have a vested interest in the future of planning, adequate staffing of the planning system, appropriate training of planners and better workplace environments for planners.

In order to facilitate the implementation of the recommendations given the range of agencies identified, the Inquiry concluded that PIA is the best-placed organisation to oversee the implementation process, working in partnership with the agencies listed above.

Specific recommendations and implementation measures for the different levels of government are outlined below.

### *Commonwealth Government*

Whilst there is a current argument that the Commonwealth Government should have a national planning agenda, in addition the Inquiry found that there was a role for the Commonwealth to:

- Recognise the planning profession as an Occupation in Demand, to make it easier for overseas planners to work in Australia; and
- Provide greater resources and funding for university planning schools, and increase the number of funded places for planning students. The Inquiry acknowledges that each university determines the funding allocation for its planning school, but recognition by the Commonwealth Government of the importance of planning courses may assist increased funding.

### *State Government*

State and territory governments develop, implement and monitor the planning legislation for their respective jurisdictions and therefore have a vested interest in ensuring the planning system runs efficiently. They also employ around 22% of planners. To date there have been varied responses by the state/territory governments to the current concerns of the planning profession and whilst the comments below are generalisations, they reflect the broad sentiments of members of the profession.

The Inquiry's findings in relation to the role that state/territory governments should have in planning employment and education are:

- To ensure that state/territory legislation, planning schemes and policies minimise "Red Tape" and complexity, as much as possible;
- Support models that improve the development assessment process;
- Support training for councillors on their roles and responsibilities under the planning system; and
- Take a more active leadership role with education and training, retention of planners and image of planning for the state/territory and work with other planning organisations to address the issues.

### *Local government*

Local government is the largest employer of planners (close to 50%) and is the sector experiencing the greatest shortage of planners. Local governments implement planning legislation and represent their local communities.

The findings of the Inquiry suggest that local government should:

- Take a lead role and with others (PIA and state/territory governments) work to improve the working conditions for planners, particularly development assessment planners, with a range of strategies including support for training, flexible work practices, resourcing, and clear relationships with elected representatives;
- Work with others to address planner supply (particularly encouraging traineeships and sharing planning staff);
- Ensure that planning schemes do not over regulate development and create overly complex procedures;
- Ensure their staff receive appropriate access to training; and
- Support universities by employing planning students for work experience.

## 8. Recommendations

The PIA Inquiry report recommended a number of specific actions to address the shortage of planners in rural and regional NSW, these include:

1. State and Local governments find innovative ways to maximise planning resources such as pooling planners and resources, and using private consultants where appropriate;
2. Encourage rural and regional councils to provide financial support to planning students from their own communities, such as scholarships.
3. Encourage rural and regional councils to offer traineeships or cadetships which would provide structured supervision and guidance for students in their third year or higher of tertiary study. The scheme would allow flexible hours based on study commitments.
4. Encourage employers to pay for fees for planning staff undertaking postgraduate planning courses.
5. Increase the number of fully funded places available at university for planning studies.
6. Ensure that rural/regional planning is part of undergraduate coursework and encourage work experience in these areas.
7. Offer university planning courses for students from specific target groups including indigenous Australians, rural/regional communities and from states/territories that do not offer planning courses.
8. Encourage people in related professions (such as architects and engineers) to obtain postgraduate planning qualifications
9. Develop mentor schemes as part of PIA membership and with their employer to support young planners, encourage them to stay in the profession and help reduce stress levels.
10. Have more accessible, ongoing professional training, such as courses offered on-line.
11. Require appropriate structured training and support to be provided by planning employers, for planning graduates.
12. Establish a free central register of available courses for planners and planning assistants, particularly for those working in rural/regional areas.
13. Improve the profile of geography and associated planning subjects and promote planning as a profession in secondary schools to attract more students to study planning
14. Promote the planning profession, job profile and the benefits of planning to school students, those working in associated areas and the community in general.
15. Increase the number of skilled planners immigrating into Australia. For this to occur the Commonwealth Government must have the planning profession included on the Migration Occupation in Demand List.
16. Implement Certificate IV Courses in Local Government (Planning) as appropriate for NSW to encourage use of planning assistants.
17. Offer more flexible work practices such as part-time, work contracts and flexibility of hours to encourage experienced female planners back into planning.

PIA NSW would be pleased to appear at the Public Hearings of the Inquiry during the Sydney sessions to further explain the current situation in relation to skills shortages in the planning profession and to explore ways in which these shortages might be addressed within the broader context of rural and regional skills shortages.



Planning  
Institute  
Australia



# Findings and Recommendations

*of the*

NATIONAL INQUIRY INTO PLANNING  
EDUCATION AND EMPLOYMENT

AUGUST 2004

# Foreword



Since I launched the consultation report in February 2004 at the Hobart conference I have been very pleased by the positive response to the Inquiry's findings. There has been little disagreement with what the Inquiry found, relief that the workplace issues have been clearly put on the agenda, and support to move forward and implement the recommendations.

Now we need to take responsibility for changing the situation.

The Steering Committee overseeing the Inquiry has put in place an Implementation Plan, funding and resources to make sure that these critical issues are kept on the agenda. It is pleasing to see that many recommendations, including accreditation of planners, have already been incorporated into the Planning Institute of Australia (PIA) Strategic Plan.

At the Hobart conference many people commented that this was the first time that the "toxic" workplace issues facing many planners, particularly in local government development assessment areas, have been openly discussed. There was a sense of relief that perhaps things could change for the better. In this regard the steering committee has recommended that PIA establish a Work Place Task Force to urgently address work place issues. This group will bring together practitioners and representatives from local government who understand the problems and can make meaningful changes.

The shortage of planners remains one of the greatest concerns to the planning profession and the integrity of the planning system. If you talk to any planning employer, the topic of how hard it is to recruit and retain staff, especially experienced planners usually comes up in the conversation.

The steering committee has recommended a range of strategies to turn this situation around, including more places at universities, flexible work places to encourage qualified female planners back into the workforce, and lifting the visas restrictions on overseas planners. The report proposes actions to address all these issues.

Based on the recommendations of the steering committee, PIA will be establishing a National Education and Professional Development Committee, comprising academics and practitioners who can provide input to university training programs and to continuing professional development. This will address the current ad hoc delivery of training and also the concerns that planners cannot get time off to attend training. It will also provide a sound platform for accreditation of planners.

The shortage and training of planning staff is integrally linked to the changing and complex nature of the planning task, to the challenges posed by high workloads, and difficult workplace environments. The consultations undertaken and the submissions received supported this view. The Inquiry's recommendations go the heart of this issue and the governance of the planning system, and must be urgently addressed if the profession is to maintain its role and the respect of employers and the community. This final report of our findings and recommendations reflects the input to the Inquiry as openly and honestly as possible.

A full list of the recommendations is contained in this final report, which is also available on the PIA web-site (<http://www.planning.org.au>). The Planning Officials Group, which sponsored the report, is being asked to continue their support through the implementation stage.

Finally, I wish to thank fellow steering committee members – Professor Steve Hamnett, Professor Brendan Gleeson, David Caddy, Barbara Norman, Neil Savery, John McInerney and Di Jay for their efforts and commitment through the deliberations of the Inquiry. Also my thanks go to Liz de Chastel, who guided our research as Policy Officer for the Inquiry and did an excellent job. Thank-you to the many people and groups who contributed ideas, thoughts and comments all of which helped shape the findings and final recommendations. I am confident that PIA is well placed and committed to implementing the recommendations of the first National Inquiry into Planning Education and Employment.

**Sue Holliday**

Chair of the Inquiry

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# Executive Summary

## Unprecedented demands

The first National Inquiry into Planning Education and Employment in Australia responded to serious concerns about the shortage of planners, their workplace environments and their professional training.

It sought to answer:

- Do we have the right skills and are we keeping up to date?
- Is there a shortage that is impacting on our ability to perform?
- If so, why and where? And what can we do about it?

The Inquiry was initiated in the wake of increased development activity bringing unprecedented demands on the planning profession. Fifty-five years after the first academic training course for planners had commenced, a national stocktake of jobs, skills and training was needed. Funded by state and territory governments, the Inquiry acknowledged the vital role that the planning profession has in ensuring the efficient and effective operation of our cities and towns.

Its recommendations have implications for the Australian Government, state and territory planning departments and agencies, local governments, universities, private sector employers, and the Planning Institute of Australia. The Inquiry has recommended that all of these parties work together to address the issues.

## Input from around the nation

Over the past year the Inquiry has reviewed submissions (45 received); undertaken a national survey of planning employers (191 responses); held workshops in most states and territories (140 attendees); received information from a survey of young planners (34 responses); listened to feedback and ideas; and spoken to interested

parties about their concerns and proposals on the current issues facing planners. The final report represents the culmination of this research and formulation of appropriate Recommendations and an Implementation Strategy to respond to the range of concerns raised during this process.

## State of planning in Australia

The Inquiry found serious labour-market deficiencies, concerns that planners were not always able to access appropriate training, and widespread acknowledgment that most planners experience unacceptable stress in the workplace.

These issues must be addressed if the profession and planning in general is to remain viable and able to meet the challenges of managing urban growth in our cities and regions.

Findings of the Inquiry included:

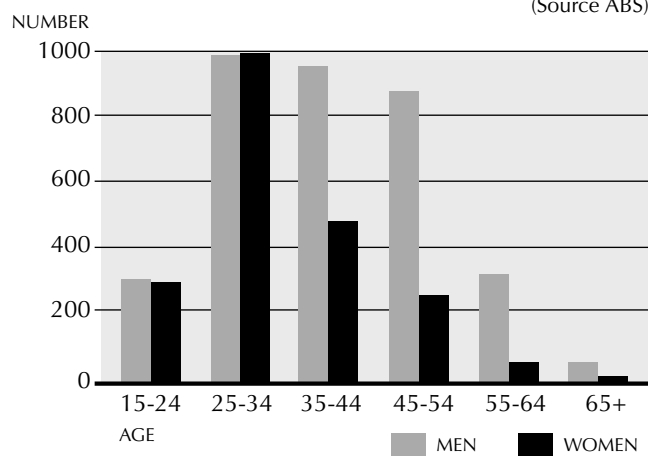
- Most cities and their regions and “sea-change” communities are suffering a critical shortage of planners. Over the past 3 years there has been on average a 16% vacancy rate in planning positions. Local government, as the largest employer of planners, faces the biggest challenge with recruiting and retaining planners.
- Rural and regional areas suffer from a long-term shortage of planners. They find it difficult to recruit planning staff.
- Planners are often subject to completely unacceptable work stress. Sources include political pressure, high volumes of work, legislative requirements, demands from the community and the development industry, and limited human and financial resources.
- Post-graduate training of planners has become increasingly important due to the ever-changing nature of the job, but getting time away from the office to attend training can be difficult, available training courses can be ad hoc or expensive and, for rural and regional planners, difficult to access.



- Around half of the 5400 planners identified in the 2001 Census worked in local government, 30% worked in the private sector, 22% in state and territory governments and the remaining 2% in the Commonwealth. In 2001, NSW had the greatest share of planners (35%), followed by Victoria (24%) and then Qld (19%).
- In 2001, women under 35 years of age comprised around 50% of the total number of planners. However, only 26% of planners over 35 years of age were female. It is conservatively estimated that about 570 qualified female planners over 35 years are no longer working in planning.
- Whilst graduate numbers appear to be adequate, they are insufficient for the large “slippage” out of the profession in Australia, with planners working overseas, moving to related disciplines, women leaving for family reasons or planners leaving the profession.

**Number of planners by age/sex for 2001 Census**

(Source ABS)



## Recommendations

The Inquiry has proposed a range of recommendations to address the full range of employment, workplace and professional development issues.

Recommendations to improve the supply of planners include:

- Increase overseas immigration opportunities.
- Increase the number of graduate places.
- Pay for HECS fees for undergraduate and fees for postgraduate courses, and support rural students and other special target groups.
- Introduce cadetships.
- Recognise the role of planning assistants.
- “Pool” planners in rural and regional Australia and promote rural/regional planning experience at universities.

Recommendations to improve the working environment and the planning system include:

- Develop a code of behaviour.
- Set up a telephone help-line.
- Compulsory training for councillors involved in development assessment.
- Support the Development Assessment Forum in improving the planning system.

Recommendations to increase professionalism include:

- Improve and coordinate compulsory professional development.
- Match skill gaps with appropriate training programs.
- Bring together planning educators and practitioners.
- Accredite individual planners.
- PIA to upgrade its support services to members.

# Implementation Strategy

The Inquiry urges the Australian Government, state and territory planning departments, local governments, universities, private sector employers and the Planning Institute of Australia to work together to implement the required changes. It believes that the Planning Institute of Australia is best placed to take the lead in co-ordinating the implementation, with funding and support from the other partner agencies.

The Inquiry has recommended a number of key implementation strategies to ensure delivery of outcomes:

- **All parties with an interest in planning should participate in the implementation of the Inquiry's recommendations**, including – the Commonwealth Government, state/territory planning departments, national and state-based local government associations, universities, private sector planning employers, the Planning Institute of Australia.
- An **Education and Employment Officer** be appointed to co-ordinate and resource the implementation, and be based in PIA National Office with funding from all partner agencies.

- A **National Education and Professional Development Committee** be established with a broad range of representation, to oversee the implementation of recommendations relating to the shortage of planners, and education and training issues.
- A **Workplace Task Force** be formed, with a broad range of representatives (particularly from local government) to oversee the implementation of recommendations to address improving work places for planners.

In addition to these key actions for implementation, the Inquiry has established timeframes and responsibilities for each recommendation. Regular reporting on the progress of implementation is also a key component of the Implementation Strategy.



(Source ACTPLA)



(Source ACTPLA)



# 1 Background to the Inquiry

## 1.1 Why have an Inquiry?

Over the last 5 years, members of the profession and senior planning executives have been discussing concerns about the shortage of planners and the impact this was having on the effectiveness of the planning system. This supply problem was initially confined to the rural and regional areas of Australia but as the property boom has increased, urban centres are also now experiencing severe shortages of experienced planners.

In recent times, planners have come under increasing pressure not only from staff shortages but also because of new and often complex planning regimes, increased development and community and political pressure. The skills that planners need are changing and planners are in demand in other specialist areas such as transport planning, natural resource management and community development.

Some local and state governments have undertaken their own assessment of these issues and are taking steps to address them. But many of the problems are no longer confined within state boundaries; they require a national response and duplication of effort across Australia is unwarranted.

For these reasons, the Planning Officials Group, which represents all State and Territory Governments in Australia, agreed in April 2003 to support an Inquiry into Planning Education and Employment, which would be conducted by the Planning Institute of Australia.

## 1.2 Steering committee

In May 2003, PIA, with funding from the Planning Officials Group, established a steering committee to direct the Inquiry. Membership of the committee comprised:

- **Ms Sue Holliday** – Chair of the Inquiry, formerly Director General of Urban Affairs and Planning, NSW and now Director, City Strategy, DEGW, Sydney.
- **Mr John McInerney** – Immediate Past President of the Planning Institute of Australia and now Deputy Lord Mayor of Sydney City Council.
- **Professor Brendan Gleeson**, Professor of Urban Management and Policy, Griffith University, Queensland.
- **Professor Stephen Hamnett** – Professor of Urban and Regional Planning, University of South Australia.
- **Ms Barbara Norman** – Program Director for Environment and Planning, Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology, Victoria and Past President of the Planning Institute of Australia.
- **Mr David Caddy** – President WA Division Planning Institute.
- **Mr Neil Savery** – representative of the Planning Officials Group and Manager ACT Planning Authority.
- **Ms Di Jay** – Chief Executive Officer, Planning Institute of Australia.

Ms Liz de Chastel (MPIA) assisted the Inquiry with its research.

## 1.3 Terms of Reference

The agreed Terms of Reference for the Inquiry were:

- Review all the existing reports and findings, hold preliminary discussions with all relevant parties, and prepare a discussion paper to set the scene, identify the issues and provide a basis for submissions.
- Clarify the future directions that the planning profession is likely to take, in order to understand the demand for different skills and competencies required to meet the needs of employers now and in the future.
- Clarify any shortfall in the availability of planners, both graduates and those with more experience, to meet the current need of planning activities around the country. Identify any mismatch between demand and supply required, with specific reference to different requirements between states, between urban, regional and rural locations, and to the needs of indigenous communities.
- Articulate the skills and competencies required to address the needs of the various employers of planning staff in the future, and strategies to support the education and on going training of those staff.
- Consider whether there is a need for an immigration program to meet a perceived immediate shortfall in experienced planning staff in Australia.
- Develop recommendations and strategies to address the findings above, with specific reference to strategies for the Commonwealth, the states, local government, the private sector, the university sector, and for PIA to adopt.

## 1.4 Discussion Paper

The steering committee released a Discussion Paper in September 2003, which identified some of the emerging issues. Responses were invited on all matters relating to the education and employment of planners, but the Discussion Paper was structured around the following principal themes:

### ■ FUTURE OF PLANNING

Planning now encompasses both regulatory and spatial governance tools to achieve strategic urban and regional outcomes. It also involves the integration of many disciplines such as transport, social and natural resources and the planner's role has changed significantly to encompass this integration.

### ■ SKILLS OF THE FUTURE

As the role of planners is changing so too are the skills required of planners. Universities need to make sure they are keeping up to date with the changes to the profession and post-professional training is critical. PIA has recently made it possible for related professional groups to join as members, reflecting the diversity in who is undertaking planning. In some cases planning assistants are being trained to work alongside planners.

### ■ SHORTAGE OF PLANNING PROFESSIONALS

There is merit in having an efficient and streamlined planning system, but if it cannot be resourced properly, it will not meet the expectations of the government, and private sector. The shortage of planners is worst in rural and regional areas of Australia, and in the cities there is also a shortage. Staff movement between employers causes a "ripple effect" and may make it difficult to define the extent of the absolute shortage. The Inquiry was also keen to determine whether this shortage was a short term problem.

## ■ THE PLANNING SYSTEM

The planning system is complex and no longer confined to dealing with just planning legislation. Many states have introduced new planning legislation and there is no national approach to planning systems.

## ■ COMMUNITY EXPECTATIONS/ RESPECT FOR THE PROFESSION

Many planners work in high pressure areas, where they are trying to balance the high expectations from the development community, elected representatives and members of the public. Some planners report they feel burnt out and stressed and bear the brunt of disaffected people in the planning system.

## ■ FAMILY FRIENDLY WORK PRACTICES

One of the reasons for the shortage of planners could be the restrictive work practices of planning employers. Many experienced planners, particularly women, find it difficult to combine work and family responsibilities.

## ■ ROLE OF THE PLANNING INSTITUTE OF AUSTRALIA

PIA does not currently accredit members, the CPD training or planning courses offered by TAFE's and other vocational trainers.

## 1.5 Key inputs

The Inquiry was keen to receive input and ideas from a wide variety of stakeholders, including members of PIA. This input was analysed, discussed and formed the basis for the recommendations.

The Inquiry undertook the following research and consultation:

- Obtained and analysed existing reports and research, including some international reports and Australian Bureau of Statistics data.
- Discussed issues with key groups such as planning recruitment agencies, Department of Immigration and the Geography Teachers Association.
- Actively sought and received 40 submissions from key stakeholders and comments made by respondents to the questionnaire, and discussed the issues around the Inquiry at major planning conferences.
- Undertook and analysed a national survey of planning employers on planner skills, recruitment and supply (191 responses).
- Held workshops in most states and territories during October/November 2003 with a total of 140 people attending the workshops.
- Provided a website with information, and formally invited submissions from a variety of stakeholders.
- Incorporated issues from feedback and submissions (five) on the Consultation Draft Report, including a survey by the Young Planners Network of 34 young planners.

## 2 Profile of a Planner

### 2.1 What does a planner do?

As stated in PIA's Strategic Plan, the planning profession plays an important role in creating livable communities, vibrant economies, sustainable places, diverse cultural expression and social cohesion.

The Strategic Plan also articulates the important role the planner plays, in the following description by the President of PIA:

*"More than any other profession, planners have the skill and insight to understand the relationships between government policy, community needs and expectations, environmental impacts, socially acceptable and spatially oriented outcomes. Planners find themselves the facilitators, mediators and conciliators in the creation of places and locally tailored solutions, at a time when globalization is increasing and we are experiencing a blurring of the interface between public and private."*

Because of their skills, planners can work in a range of activities and alongside or co-ordinating other professions involved in urban management or rural/regional planning. The major jurisdictions that employ planners are:

- **LOCAL GOVERNMENT** – Planners manage the development assessment functions of councils and undertake strategic and local planning and co-ordinate with other functions of councils such as economic development and social planning.
- **PRIVATE SECTOR** – Planners working in the private sector can be involved in a range of activities including facilitation of approvals for development, neighborhood design, research, consultation and studies on behalf of public sector agencies across the full spectrum of planning activity.
- **STATE GOVERNMENT** – Within planning departments, planners are involved in developing state planning legislation and policies, overseeing the planning system in the state, co-ordination of major state and private sector development and regional planning. Planners can now be found working in policy or project areas of other related state agencies such as environment, transport, major projects, natural resources and housing.

### 2.2 Why is planning important?

Planning strategies for local, metropolitan, regional or rural areas can lead to better outcomes for a community and the environment, as well as better use of resources. The planning process fosters greater co-operation and co-ordination of service delivery agencies, engages the public in debate and provides certainty for the private sector. Studies have also demonstrated the economic benefits that planning provides.

As our urban systems become more complex, planners will be in demand to play an increasing role in managing these changes. Skilled professionals who can address these issues and advise governments, are critical to the successful delivery of economic vitality, environmental enhancement, and community well being.

Modelling work undertaken by the National Institute of Economic and Industry Research has shown that improved structuring of the metropolitan region alone would enable the NSW economy to be \$1.4 billion larger than it would otherwise have been in 15 years time and the Australian GDP would be boosted by \$1.7 billion. There would be 20 000 more jobs in NSW and 24 000 more jobs across Australia.

## 2.3 What skills do planners need?

When the first graduates finished their courses half a century or so ago, the skills required were in regulating development in accordance with zoning plans and designing new suburbs to meet the demands of Australia's growing population.

With the complexity of our urban forms and systems and increased expectations of what planning can deliver, new spatial planning skills have been required encompassing urban design, social planning, environmental planning, local economic planning, regional planning and transport planning. Planners also need a range of generic skills such as negotiation, facilitation, consultation, project management, teamwork and complex analysis.

A recent study conducted by Dr Robert Zehner (2002) of the University of New South Wales indicated that, whilst there are new skills required, some of the traditional planning skills have remained the same such as planning law, development control/statutory planning, administration (general) and negotiation/conflict resolution. He found that some skills have become more prominent in recent years – in particular, participation techniques/community liaison and communication techniques

The diversity of roles and skills that planners undertake has recently been recognised by PIA in its membership structure, with the establishment of Chapters within the Institute to cater for different fields of planning such as social planning and urban design.

## 2.4 How are planners trained?

In 2003 there were 13 universities accredited by PIA, offering a range of undergraduate and postgraduate planning courses (a full list of courses is available at [www.planning.org.au](http://www.planning.org.au)). The accreditation is undertaken by a visiting board and conducted in accordance with the Institute's Education Policy. Each planning course must offer knowledge, skills and professional

ethics as set out in the Institute's Guidelines for the Core Curriculum of Planning (Appendix A). To become members of the Institute, planners are required to have completed an accredited course and obtained experience in a number of specified areas. Chapters of the Institute have recently been established to recognize planners in other fields such as social planning and urban design.

Each year members of the Institute are required to provide details of professional development undertaken. Members are required to undertake twenty-five hours of training over 2 years with a minimum of 10 hours in any one year. Up to 50% of this training can be in a non-planning field. The training can be in a variety of forms including seminars, conferences and lectures. To date the Institute has not monitored the provision of this information vigilantly and failure to complete an annual return does not currently compromise membership.

## 2.5 Major issues facing planners

Based on the research and information obtained by the Inquiry, planners are often working in environments characterised by:

- Complex and often new planning legislation, including legislation in related areas.
- As foreshadowed in the Inquiry's Terms of Reference, a shortage of planners in both urban and rural/regional areas in Australia.
- Well informed communities and political pressure by elected representatives.
- In the cities there is increased development pressure leading to resources being directed to controlling development at the expense of developing strategic policies.
- In rural and regional areas, resources are scarce but planners are often dealing with large-scale issues such as environmental management, resource development and economic plans.



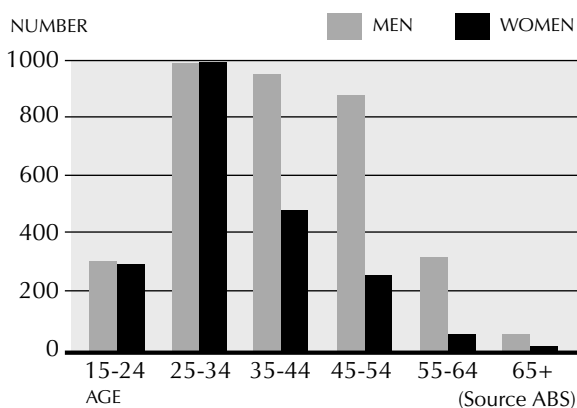
## 2.6 Labour market analysis

In the 2001 Census there were 5400 people identified as Urban and Regional Planners in Australia, compared to 3700 in 1996. In reality there may be more planners than indicated in the Census, due to planners working in related disciplines or moving into managerial positions. Nevertheless the Census provides the best labour market data available.

The increase in planners (by 47%) between 1996 and 2001 may be attributable to more people identifying themselves as planners as well as an increase in the number of graduate planners.

### ■ AGE/SEX PROFILE

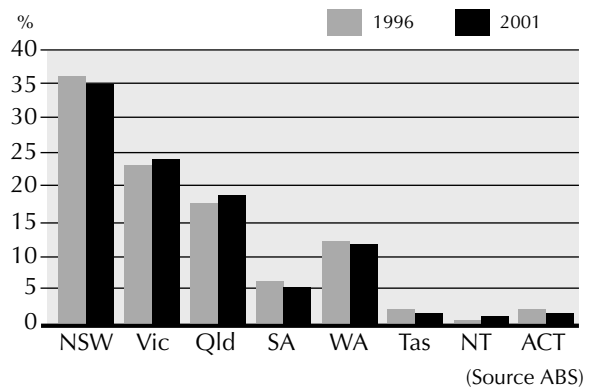
In 2001, 46% (2484) of planners were under 35 years of age whilst 54% (2916) were above 35. The 55 plus age group, nearing retirement age, represents 7% of the total number of planners. An age/sex profile of these 5400 planners is shown on the graph below:



In 2001, women under 35 years of age comprised around 50% of the total number of planners in the Census. However, women only represent 26% of the total number of planners over 35 years of age. Using Department of Education Science and Training figures, women comprise around 40% of graduates. Therefore a conservative estimate would be that in 2001 in the order of 570 qualified female planners aged over 35 years were not working as planners. (There would also be a number of men who are no longer working as planners though this is difficult to quantify). In addition, in 2001 one in four female urban and regional planners worked part-time compared to one in ten men.

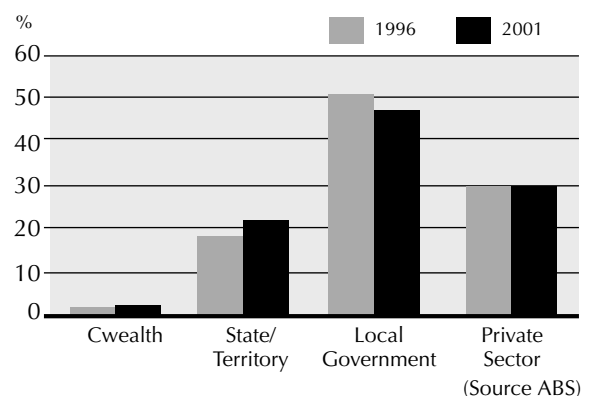
### ■ STATE/TERRITORY COMPOSITION

In 2001, NSW had 1890 planners, the largest share of planners (35%), followed by Victoria (24%) and then Qld (19%). A graph showing the distribution of urban and regional planners by States is below:



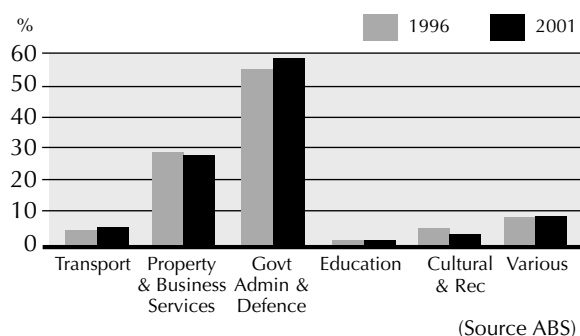
### ■ INDUSTRY SECTOR

The largest industry sector employer in 2001 was local government, which employed approximately 2540 planners, 47% of the total number of urban and regional planners. This number had declined slightly from 1996 (by 4% between the 1996 and 2001 Census) with a corresponding increase in state government employment. After local government, the private sector employed the largest number of planners (30%), followed by state and territory governments (21.9%) and Commonwealth (1.8%).



### ■ INDUSTRY OF EMPLOYMENT

As expected the majority of planners (60%) work in Government Administration and Defence. Property and Business Services is the second biggest category.



## ■ INCOME LEVELS

The 1996 and 2001 ABS data for median incomes for salaries for planners under 24 years of age is set out in the table below, for males/females and by sector. Whilst this table includes planning graduates it also includes salaries of planning students, working part-time and studying so will be lower than the actual graduate salaries. [See Table 1]

The starting salary for graduates has increased substantially since 2001. In 2002, the median salary for architecture and building graduates

(which includes planners) was \$32 000, but was lower than graduates in engineering \$40 000, law \$37 000 and social work \$35 000<sup>1</sup>. In 2003/2004 the commencing salary for graduates is within the following range:

- ~ Local government - \$35 000 – \$42 000 (plus super).
- ~ Private sector - \$32 000 – \$38 000 (plus super)<sup>2</sup>.

In comparison, in 2003, an engineering graduate commanded \$39 750 starting salary<sup>3</sup>.

A similar increase in salaries for experienced planners has occurred from the Census data of 2001. [See Table 2]

In 2003/2004 the salary range for planners, with 10 years or more experience is estimated to be:

- ~ Local government – \$60 000 minimum (plus super).
- ~ private sector – \$80 000 minimum (plus super)<sup>4</sup>.

**TABLE 1 ~ Median Personal Income for Planners (less than 24 years old)**

(Source ABS)

SECTOR	MALES			FEMALES		
	1996	2001	% Increase	1996	2001	% Increase
Commonwealth	\$28080	\$30836	9.8	\$26780	\$28548	6.6
State/Territory	\$24336	\$29952	23	\$24700	\$30940	25
Local Government	\$20176	\$23868	18.3	\$20488	\$23764	16
Private Sector	\$17524	\$19448	11	\$14404	\$15288	6.1

**TABLE 2 ~ Median Personal Income for Experienced Planners (35+ year olds)**

(Source ABS)

SECTOR	MALES			FEMALES		
	1996	2001	% Increase	1996	2001	% Increase
Commonwealth	\$41496	\$52832	27	\$30680	\$38376	25
State/Territory	\$41288	\$52156	26	\$28236	\$35048	24
Local Government	\$28964	\$35880	24	\$21580	\$28548	32
Private Sector	\$30732	\$37960	23.5	\$20834	\$25116	23

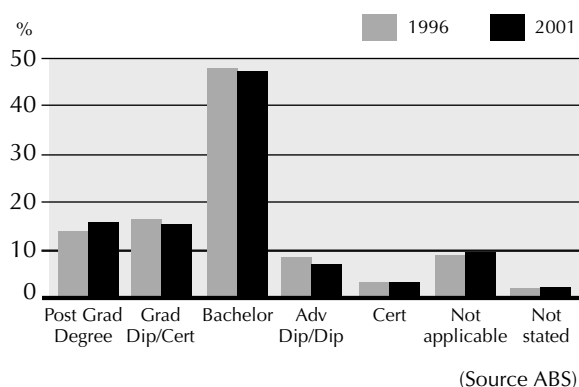
A range of salaries is offered to planners depending on job requirements and location, and many private sector employers opt to negotiate the salary package depending on the applicant's qualifications and experience. For example, a sample of jobs advertised on PIA's Web Based Employment Service<sup>5</sup>, indicates the following salaries:

- ~ Local government - Planning Officer - \$37 000 – \$47 000.
- ~ Local government - Strategic Planner - \$45 000 – \$57 000 (+super).
- ~ Local government - Director Planning and Environment - \$158 000.
- ~ Private consultant - Town Planner – up to \$80 000.

Recruitment firms indicate that planner salaries have increased due to the shortage of planners and are aware that planners with a few years of experience can now obtain higher paying jobs than before because more experienced planners are not available. It has also been reported that some graduates have been offered vehicles on top of their salaries and some rural councils have offered graduates up to \$60 000.

## ■ QUALIFICATIONS

Close to 80% of urban and regional planners held a bachelor degree or higher with the graph below showing the highest level of qualifications obtained for urban and regional planners in 1996 and 2001.



## ■ SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS FROM CENSUS

Some of the key findings from the Census are:

- ~ In 2001 there were 5400 urban and regional planners, an increase of 1700 from the 1996 Census.
- ~ 46% of planners were aged under 35 years of age.
- ~ Women are underrepresented in the over 35 year age group, (with potentially 570 qualified women planners over 35 no longer working as planners).
- ~ One in four women planners work part-time compared to one in ten men.
- ~ NSW has the largest share of planners (35%), followed by Victoria (24%) and then Qld (19%).
- ~ Local government employed nearly half of all planners, the private sector 30% and state/territory governments 22%.
- ~ Income levels increased substantially between 1996 – 2001.
- ~ 80% of planners held bachelor degrees or higher.

## 3 Literature Review

One of the Terms of Reference of the Inquiry required a review of all existing reports and findings. Many reports and papers were made available to the Inquiry but only the outcomes of the major ones are discussed in this section.

### 3.1 State/territory and local government reports

In recent times, a number of local and state/territory governments have undertaken major reviews and analysis of planning skills, and supply of planners. A brief summary of these major reports, as they relate to the Terms of Reference for this Inquiry, is provided below:

#### ■ SOUTH AUSTRALIA

In February 2003, the Local Government Association of South Australia completed a report on *Planning Skills Retention and Development in Local Government*. The report concluded that due to a diverse range of skills used by planners, it was unrealistic for university planning schools to provide the “complete education enabling a graduate to step into any sector of planning<sup>6</sup>”. Discussions with planners from 15 councils found significant issues for development assessment planners, a long term problem with recruiting planners to country areas and a significant problem with recruiting and retaining experienced planners in local government. The report made a number of recommendations for increasing the number of planners (such as using consultants, training para-professional staff and pooling resources), introducing one year cadetships, and a review of council operations (such as flexible working hours and delegation of powers).

#### ■ VICTORIA

In 2001 the former Victorian Department of Infrastructure (now Department of Sustainability and Environment) and the Municipal Association of Victoria undertook a comprehensive study into issues for planners in local government because of concerns with staffing levels in council planning departments and the skills of these planners. The report concluded that addressing these issues was not a simple task and proposed strategies around 6 broad themes –

- ~ competency
- ~ education
- ~ training and professional development
- ~ Local government work environment
- ~ community education
- ~ professional image

In response to the recommendations, the Department of Sustainability has prepared competency standards for six grades of planners and is developing a suitable Certificate IV (Local Government Planning) course for Planning Assistants.

#### ■ QUEENSLAND

The Queensland Local Government Association in 2003 surveyed local governments in Queensland to determine pressures on the development assessment function. Most councils reported difficulties in attracting experienced planners and rural and regional councils were competing for planners with larger urban councils, which can offer higher salaries. The perception is that new planning legislation has created more complex processes and a greater need for planning staff to keep up to date with their training.

## ■ TASMANIA

As a response to the closure of the Tasmanian planning course, John Vandenberg undertook a survey of Tasmanian local governments investigating planning staff numbers, workload, qualifications, recruitment, study and assistance offered for planning education. The survey found that the demand for planners is static or slightly increasing in the future, and the report noted the benefits of training planners within Tasmania. In 2003, the University of Tasmania commenced a new Graduate Diploma of Environmental Planning course and in 2004 will be commencing a Masters of Environmental Planning.

## ■ NEW SOUTH WALES

Concerns with the planning system, development pressure, and shortage and burn-out of planners prompted a number of the regional organisations of councils in the Sydney area to conduct their own investigations into the problems and make recommendations. Whilst these organisations can address some of the issues within their member councils such as sharing staff between councils, many issues identified such as changes to the development assessment process require a response from the state government. There is currently a major review of planning policy and legislation underway in NSW.

## ■ WESTERN AUSTRALIA

Whilst no recent studies on planning education or employment from Western Australia have been made available to the Inquiry, a recent assignment from a planning student at Curtin University on how to raise the profile of planning<sup>7</sup> has been submitted for consideration. A number of innovative ideas have been proposed including – develop a CD game such as SimCity and placing considerable resources into promoting planning to school children.

## 3.2 Commonwealth initiatives

A number of recent investigations and Inquiries being conducted by the Federal Government have direct relevance to the issues raised through this Inquiry.

### ■ NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT ASSESSMENT REFORM

The Development Assessment Forum established by the Commonwealth Department of Transport and Regional Development in 1998, is aiming to improve the development assessment process and provide national standards for development assessment. It has commissioned a number of reports into various aspects of development assessment and a recent report “Leveraging the Long Term: A Model of Leading Practice Development Assessment” recommended that there be:

- ~ Better systems and better training for development assessment planners.
- ~ Increased delegation of planning decisions as a result of better policy frameworks.

### ■ PRODUCTIVITY COMMISSION REVIEW OF HOUSING AFFORDABILITY

In December 2003 the Productivity Commission released a draft report on affordability and availability of housing for first home buyers and one of the recommendations was that planning systems be streamlined and made less complex to ensure a timely supply of land. The report also recommended increased delegation of assessment so that councillor’s time is spent on policy making rather than detailed development assessment. A number of submissions to the Inquiry were critical of planners and planning processes, recognizing issues such as shortages of qualified planners, complexity and volume of development applications as issues.

The Productivity Commission’s final report on *First Home Ownership* has recently been released and the Commonwealth Government has responded. The report made reference to

PIA's position on a range of planning issues affecting first home ownership, as well as some of the issues raised in the Consultation Draft Report of the National Inquiry into Planning Education and Employment. Debate on the Productivity Commission's recommendations is underway.

## ■ SUSTAINABLE CITIES INQUIRY

In August 2003 the Federal Government commenced an Inquiry into Sustainable Cities. The Inquiry is identifying ecologically sustainable patterns of development as well as how the Federal Government can influence urban development reforms to promote sustainable settlement. In its Discussion Paper one of the visionary objectives for a sustainable city was to have urban plans that accommodate lifestyle and business opportunities. Submissions to the Inquiry closed at the end of October 2003 and the Inquiry is now considering the submissions.

## 3.3 Overseas research

Anecdotal evidence suggests that there is also a planner supply problem in other countries as well. To meet the current shortage, the Royal Town Planning Institute (UK) has a document on its web pages advising planners from Australia and New Zealand how to get work in the United Kingdom and notes, "There are almost always vacancies for qualified planners in the London boroughs or elsewhere in the overheated South-East of Britain, where employers find it hard to retain staff <sup>8</sup>".

Advice received from one of the New Zealand planning schools was that a large number of graduates work off shore creating difficulties for the local job market. A recent article in an Irish newspaper stated that "Morale amongst planners in the public sector is at rock bottom as their career structures are being dismantled while workloads continue to soar <sup>9</sup>." In turn, the international shortage of planners has also made it easier for qualified Australian planners to find work overseas, particularly in the UK.

The Royal Town Planning Institute (UK) Education Commission released a report in 2003, which reviewed the Institute's policies, practices and requirements relating to the education, training and qualifications of planners. Similar to the Australian experience, it found planning had diversified to include urban design, community planning, transport planning, regeneration and more. The RTPI defined its basic discipline as spatial planning and recognized that planning education should respond to the changing nature of planning. Amongst other recommendations the Institute articulated learning outcomes for graduates from spatial planning programs and defined the qualities of an Effective Planning School. The eight qualities of an effective planning school are:

- ~ Clear planning focus
- ~ Institutional support
- ~ Achievements
- ~ Stakeholder involvement
- ~ Professional involvement
- ~ External examiners
- ~ Resources
- ~ Equality and diversity <sup>10</sup>

These qualities could also have relevance to Australian planning schools.



(Source ACTPLA)

## 4 Inquiry's Research

### 4.1 National Questionnaire

The steering committee undertook an Australia wide survey of planning employers, the first of its kind to gather national data on the skills of planners, training requirements, recruitment and retention of planners. A copy of the questionnaire can be accessed on-line at [www.planning.org.au/educationinq.ssi](http://www.planning.org.au/educationinq.ssi). The questionnaire was sent by e-Mail on 23rd October 2003 to all local governments (with the exception of rural Victorian local governments where a separate survey was undertaken and discussed below), all planning consultants on PIA's address list and state and territory planning agencies. A follow up e-Mail to remind people to respond was sent on 26th November 2003.

A total of 191 responses were received out of a total of approximately 1165 questionnaires that were distributed, giving a 16% response rate. The 191 organisations that responded employed a total of 1250 planners (around 23% of the number identified in the 2001 Census), and 37% or 464 of these planners were members of PIA.

At the time of writing this report, some preliminary data had been received from the survey of Victorian rural and regional local governments. This survey commenced in December 2003, was funded by the Victorian Government, and conducted in partnership with PIA Victorian Division. The same questionnaire was used as the major survey discussed above. The responses from 25 councils (out of a total of 48 surveyed) were made available to the Inquiry in January 2004 and some of the early results from this survey have been provided below, as supplementary comments to the results of the major survey.

#### ■ RESPONSES RECEIVED

The number and percentages of total responses from each state/territory are shown below in Table 3. The final column indicates the percentage of planners located in each state/territory according to the 2001 Census for the purposes of comparison.

NSW had the largest response rate, reflecting the state's large number of planners.

**TABLE 3 ~ Responses to survey by state/territory**

State/Territory	Number of Responses	% of Total Responses	Percentage of Planners located in each State/Territory from 2001 Census
NSW	73	38.2%	35.1%
WA	31	16.2%	11.7%
Qld	31	16.2%	18.8%
Victoria - Urban	23	12%	24.1%
SA	14	7.3%	5.4%
Tas	9	4.7%	2.2%
NT	9	4.7%	1.1%
ACT	1	.5%	1.5%

The responses received by industry sector are shown in Table 4. Local government employers provided around three quarters of the questionnaire responses.

## ■ MAIN PLANNING ACTIVITIES OF THE ORGANISATION

The top five rankings for the main planning activities of the organisation now and in 5 years time are shown in Table 5.

**TABLE 4 ~ Responses to survey by industry sector**

Organisation	Responses	% of Total
Local Government	142	74.3%
State Government	6	3.1%
Planning Consultancies	41	21.5%
Universities	2	1.0%
Commonwealth Government	0	0%

## ■ MAIN SPECIALTIES/EXPERTISE OF PLANNERS

The top five specialties for planners now and in five to ten years time are shown in Table 6.

## ■ TRAINING OF PLANNERS

For planning employers, the greatest constraint to training their planners was time away from the office (36%), lack of appropriate training courses (22%), accessibility to training (22%), and the prohibitive costs of training (18%). The time spent away from the office was a very significant concern to local government organisations. For Victorian rural and regional local governments the biggest concern was prohibitive costs and accessibility to training. When asked whether PIA can assist with professional training of their staff the overwhelming response was yes, that PIA should provide regular meaningful courses to address specific topics.

**TABLE 5 ~ Top five rankings for the main planning activities**

NOW	5 – 10 Years Time
1 Statutory planning	1 Statutory Planning
2 Strategic planning	2 Strategic Planning
3 Environmental Planning	3 Urban Design
4 Urban Design and Regional Planning	4 Environmental Planning
5 Transport Planning	5 Infrastructure Planning and Transport Planning

**TABLE 6 ~ Top five rankings for specialist planning**

NOW	5 – 10 Years Time
1 Development Assessment	1 Development Assessment
2 Strategic planning	2 Strategic Planning
3 Environmental Planning	3 Environmental Planning
4 Negotiation/Conflict Resolution	4 Urban Design
5 Urban Design	5 Local Area Planning



## ■ QUALIFICATIONS OF PLANNERS

The qualifications of planners in the organisations surveyed are shown in Table 7. Some planners have more than one degree but the majority have a degree or diploma in planning and 20% have related degrees.

**TABLE 7 ~ Planners' qualifications**

Qualifications	Number	% of Total
Degree/Diploma in Planning	852	58%
Postgraduate Planning Degree	214	21%
Related Degree/Diploma	167	11%
Related Postgraduate Degree	142	10%

## ■ RECRUITMENT

The most popular form of recruitment was newspaper advertising, followed by Internet advertising, personal contacts and then traineeships. A range of other methods were also used to recruit planners such as headhunting, recruitment specialists, PIA web-based Employment Service, using students, secondments, and the Local Government Job Guide.

## ■ VACANCIES

In the last 6 months survey respondents identified 243 vacancies around Australia for planners. In the period 6–12 months ago there were 170 vacancies, 12–24 months ago, 227 vacancies and 2–3 years ago 210 vacancies. Given there are 1251 planners included in this questionnaire the vacancy rate for the last 3 years has ranged from 13–19%. These figures from a representative sample of planning organisations can be used as an indicator of the problem being faced in the wider planning profession.

The survey of Victorian rural and regional local governments indicated a vacancy rate of 18% in the last six months.

The number of vacancies in the last 6 months by state/territory as identified in the survey is shown in Table 8.

The vacancies in the last 6 months by industry sector are shown in Table 9.

The majority of respondents reported problems filling these vacancies. The top three reasons for having these difficulties were poor response to advertisement, lack of appropriate skills and reluctance to relocate. When asked whether PIA could do anything to help recruit planners the top five responses were – place younger people in regional areas, promote the profession, have an inventory of skilled planners and recruitment agencies, promote regional planning and training, have increased places at universities and increased skill planner immigration.

**TABLE 8 ~ Vacancies by State/Territory**

State/Territory	Number of Respondents	Number of Vacancies	% of Total Vacancies
NSW	73	82	33.0%
WA	31	43	17.7%
Qld	31	52	21.4%
Vic - Urban	23	37	15.2%
SA	14	22	9.1%
Tas	9	3	1.2%
NT	9	4	1.6%
ACT	1	0	0%

**TABLE 9 ~ Vacancies by industry sector**

Industry Sector	Number of Respondents	Number of Vacancies	% of Total Vacancies
Local Government	142	196	79.4%
State Government	6	11	4.5%
Planning Consultancies	41	36	14.8%
Universities	2	0	0%

## ■ RETAINING PLANNERS

Around 50% of the respondents reported problems retaining planning staff. Incentives were being put in place to encourage planning staff to stay in their current positions such as flexi-time, new work opportunities, flexibility of hours including working from home and better remuneration packages.

## ■ PLANNING POSITIONS IN THE FUTURE

Of the organisations surveyed, 63% will be employing more planners in 5-10 years time, 33% will stay the same and only 2.8% say their demand will decrease. There was a higher representation of planning consultancies amongst the organisations requiring additional planners.

The 113 organisations which will be increasing the number of planners they employ, will be requiring a total of 360 additional planners or a 28% increase from the current numbers, in the next 5–10 years. For Victorian rural and regional local governments this figure is even higher at 50%.

## ■ PLANNING ASSISTANTS

40% of respondents employ planning assistants, primarily due to a shortage of planners (83%). Nearly 65% of rural and regional Victorian councils employ planning assistants, mainly for public enquiries and routine development assessment. The four main tasks of the planning assistant were identified as research, public enquiries, report writing and routine development assessment.

## ■ SUMMARY OF MAJOR FINDINGS FROM THE NATIONAL QUESTIONNAIRE

The figures obtained from the Questionnaire provide a snapshot of the current unmet and future demand for planners. To provide an indication of how this may translate nationally, the current vacancy rate and percentage increase in the workforce provided by responses to the national questionnaire, can be applied to the 2001 Census data (Table 10). This provides a broad estimate of the total unmet and future demand requirements for planners on a national basis.

**TABLE 10 ~ Unmet and future demands**

Industry Sector	Data from Questionnaire	Extrapolation from 2001 Census Data
Number of planners currently employed	1251	5400
Average vacancy rate of 16% over the last 3 years	200	864
Estimated number of additional planners required in the next 5-10 years	360	1565

Other key points from the questionnaire include:

- Half of the respondents had trouble retaining planning staff.
- Planning assistants were being employed due to a shortage of qualified planners.
- The greatest constraint for ongoing training was time away from the office.
- The main skills for planners in 5–10 years time were - Development Assessment, Strategic Planning, Environmental Planning, Urban Design and Local Area Planning.

## 4.2 Submissions

The Inquiry actively sought submissions by sending out letters and calling for submissions wherever practical through workshops, steering committee members promoting the Inquiry at conferences, journal articles and PIA's website. As at the end of January 2004, the Inquiry had received 40 submissions from the private sector, state and local governments and individuals from around Australia. A full list of submitters is at Appendix B.

In addition, the Inquiry received five submissions (Appendix B) during the consultation phase on the Inquiry's draft findings and recommendations. One of these was from the National Young Planners Network whose submission represented comments from thirty-four of its members.

Many people who responded to the questionnaire also provided additional comments and ideas on planning education and employment and these have also been taken into consideration.

Submissions covered a wide range of issues and problems around employment, the planning system and education. Many submitters also provided ideas for how to address problems identified and many of these have been incorporated in to the Inquiry's recommendations.

An overview of the major issues raised in the submissions is provided below:

### ■ PLANNER SHORTAGES

There was general agreement that there was a shortage of planners but the scale of the problem varied around Australia. The reasons for the shortage included "churning" (movement between employers), new and complex legislation which required more planners to implement, and increased development pressure. Some submissions cautioned against over-acting to the shortage, as it may be a temporary problem, and particularly cautioning against increasing the number of places in planning courses as this may lead to an oversupply in the medium term.

Responses to the shortage included addressing the work environments within local governments, bringing in more overseas planners, traineeships, and greater attention to addressing the problem by state and local governments. The Young Planners Network specifically saw mentoring as a sound way to support the young planner stay in the profession and alleviate high stress levels experienced by graduate planners.

### ■ DEVELOPMENT ASSESSMENT ISSUES

Submissions highlighted difficulties experienced by professionals employed as development assessment planners - the public face of the planning profession. Many submissions pointed out that development assessment planners work in high stress environments, are dealing with complex issues and may not have the appropriate skills or support mechanisms available to them to deal with the projects and tight legislative time frames. The suggestions to improve workplaces for planners included:

- ~ Improving the development assessment process.
- ~ Reducing some of the undue political interference.
- ~ Mentor schemes, flexible work conditions and increased training opportunities.

## ■ PLANNER SKILLS AND TRAINING

Submissions from the private sector made comments about the need for planners to have increased skills gained from university courses and on the job training, particularly skills required for development assessment such as negotiation, project management and economics of development. University planning courses should also teach students about how the development industry operates. Young planners who have recently completed their degrees made similar comments. The survey of young planners undertaken by the Young Planners Network, indicated greater emphasis should be placed on the following skills in the planning degree – negotiation, conflict resolution, project management, practical “how to” knowledge and planning law. The young planners and others acknowledged the value of compulsory work experience as part of the degree.

Professional development courses should be specific, co-ordinated and also accessible (possibly on-line) to planners in rural and regional areas as well. PIA should have a role in monitoring TAFE courses and a greater role in continuing professional development.

## ■ PROFILE OF PLANNING

There were a number of comments about the need to lift the profile of the planning profession and make it more attractive for younger people, with PIA playing a more active role than in the past. Young planners commented on the lack of role models of planners who are prominent in the community and suggested profiles of eminent planners be made available. There were also suggestions about making geography and related urban planning subjects more attractive for high school students.

These comments sum up well the dilemma facing the planning profession:

*“In one sense planning is a high profile activity. Local and metropolitan newspapers are full of it. There was even a local planning controversy on Neighbours a year or two ago. Nevertheless, planning as a profession remains fairly mysterious to the general public. People have a reasonably clear notion of what lawyers do – or architects, or doctors...They don’t have nearly such a clear picture of what planners do. In fact, many are not even aware of the existence of a planning profession as such <sup>11</sup>.”*



(Source ACTPLA)

## 4.3 Workshops

Each state and territory division of PIA was invited to hold a workshop in their state, invite a range of stakeholders, discuss the issues around employment and education relevant to their jurisdiction, and report on the findings. Consequently during October and November 2003, workshops were held in Western Australia, New South Wales, Australian Capital Territory, Victoria, South Australia and two workshops were held in Queensland. Approximately 140 individuals or representatives of organisations participated in these national workshops.

The workshops provided an opportunity for members of the profession to come together to discuss current issues facing the profession and to debate ideas. There was a high degree of consistency between the issues raised at the workshops and those raised in submissions. To avoid repetition, three different issues or innovative ideas to come out of each workshop, not previously discussed in this report, are provided below:

### ■ NEW SOUTH WALES

- ~ Australian planners are in demand off-shore; need to be aware of the 'globalization' context of demand for planning skills.
- ~ Local council amalgamations may actually improve career pathways for planners.
- ~ Instability in industry employment may come from salary differentials across local government areas.

### ■ WESTERN AUSTRALIA

- ~ Young planners have different values than 20–30 years ago.
- ~ Shortage has existed for 15 years; shortages in urban design, statutory and transport planning and an oversupply in environmental planners.
- ~ Graduates dropped in to high pressure jobs (regional).

### ■ QUEENSLAND

- ~ The professional and policy world – state and local governments and consultants – could do more to support ongoing professional training for staff.
- ~ Mentoring programs may help to stem the tide of younger staff leaving the profession, especially in non-metropolitan areas.
- ~ Some universities in Australia, offered associate diplomas in planning which provided a good vehicle for the training of development assessment specialists. These diplomas tended to disappear when local government professional grades were revised and increased emphasis was put on obtaining full university degrees for planning professionals.

### ■ AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

- ~ PIA's continuing professional development needs to be taken more seriously like other Institutes.
- ~ Many workplaces have people doing planning jobs who aren't qualified. How do they fit in to the picture?
- ~ Experienced planners (and older planners) need to stay in the profession whilst there is a planner shortage – to pass on their knowledge and experience.

### ■ SOUTH AUSTRALIA

- ~ Planning inspectors and enforcement officers, as well as planners are in short supply.
- ~ The autonomy and identity of the planning school (University of South Australia) is threatened (forced into a larger school) and the association with engineering is seen as a likely deterrent to women entering the courses.
- ~ The University of South Australia's work placement program for third year undergraduate planning students was seen as a successful initiative to bridge the gap between university and professional practice.

## ■ VICTORIA

- ~ Publicity about planning has increased in the media, together with the release of the planning game CD and a greater effort by PIA in careers events seems to be paying off.
- ~ Strong concern about low profile of planners in the community and the difficult role that the statutory planner has in local government.
- ~ Difficulty of presenting a comprehensive education program in universities to meet all the needs for a planner to enter the workforce and importance of life skills for planners; work experience incorporated into courses is proving to be very valuable.

## 4.4 University planning schools

Discussions with academics on the Inquiry Steering Committee and through submissions and the workshops indicated that most university planning schools were not receiving adequate funding and teaching resources. This has also been evident and the subject of comments and recommendations by PIA in its accreditation reviews of courses in recent times. Planning schools in some universities are funded on the same basis as Arts Degrees, but this fails to take into account the cost of fieldwork, studio and sessional teaching costs incurred in delivering a planning course. In addition, some planning schools are now located within larger departments in distantly related disciplines and have difficulty, as a consequence, in maintaining a high profile.

Despite this, information obtained from the Federal Department of Education, Science and Training (DEST) shows that enrolments in planning courses have increased by 23% between the years 1993 and 2000 (from around 1700 students per year in 1993 to 2100 in 2000). The proportion of planning students enrolled in postgraduate programs in 1997 was 34%, in 1998, 31% and in 1999, 30%<sup>12</sup>. In 2003, 1200 students were enrolled in undergraduate planning programs<sup>13</sup>.

There are around 15% more male students than female planning students though this can vary between different years, and the planning schools. Between 1993 and 2000 the planning students comprised approximately 43% females and 57% males<sup>14</sup>.

Today, many planners undertake work within or with aboriginal communities. Unfortunately indigenous Australians are poorly represented in the planning courses. In 2003 there were only two indigenous students enrolled in undergraduate planning programs<sup>15</sup>.

Planning courses are now attracting more overseas students who pay full fees, although numbers are not high across the country. Postgraduate courses have become increasingly popular in the last 2-3 years, although recent Federal Government reforms to the university sector are likely to mean that postgraduate, and possibly undergraduate, courses will attract higher fees from 2005. It is not easy to foresee the effects of this at this stage, but it is possible that higher fees will depress demand for these courses.

Generally most undergraduate courses fill their quota though some planning schools have reported some difficulties in the past in recruiting school leavers to the undergraduate programs. Some universities are concerned that increasing their number of places will cause a glut of planners in 4–5 years time.

The number of places offered to planning students is set by internal university quotas so any increase in the enrolment numbers for undergraduate students would have to be agreed to by the university. There are problems related to increasing student numbers if they are not accompanied by increased staff and support services in planning schools.

However, there is support from the profession to increase the number of planners being trained at universities, to keep pace with the demand for planners in the workforce. The current shortage, coupled with employers indicating a growing increase in planning positions means that additional qualified planners will be required to meet the demand.

Generally the universities are confident that they are teaching the appropriate skills to planning students. Some of the issues around this are:

- ~ There is a difficulty in recruiting lecturers, particularly with specialized skills (ie urban design) to match training needs.
- ~ Generally the local planning profession often through PIA provides valuable input and comment on course content.
- ~ Placement of planning students for work experience improves the skill levels of the student and their attractiveness to the market.

## 4.5 Discussions with relevant agencies

During the course of researching the issues the Inquiry spoke to a wide range of people and agencies, some of whom contacted the Inquiry of their own accord.

Some of the more significant discussions are summarized below:

### ■ PLANNING RECRUITMENT AGENCIES

Three planning recruitment agencies, Hamilton James Bruce, McArthur Management and Hays Montrose, operating respectively from their Sydney, Melbourne and Brisbane offices were contacted to gain an understanding of the labour market from a recruitment perspective. All three agencies reported difficulties filling planning positions, with the Sydney agency having up to 70 positions available. The agencies believed this was due to “churning” within the profession (flow on effects of promotions and movement of planners), high demand for planners, planners leaving the profession and poor image of planning and in particular local government.

Planners were being recruited from interstate, but as with recruiting overseas planners, there were some employers reluctant to recruit planners who did not have knowledge of the local planning system. However, all recruitment firms had placed overseas planners (from South Africa, New Zealand and United Kingdom) and had received a

good response from overseas planners invited to work in Australia. The current visa requirement for overseas planners was considered to be cumbersome and professional migration difficult without recognition as a profession in demand.

### ■ DEPARTMENT OF IMMIGRATION

The Department of Immigration and Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs acknowledged the Inquiry’s concern about the shortage of planners, as many other professional groups were also experiencing similar supply problems.

To work in Australia, an overseas-qualified planner must meet the following criteria:

- ~ Have the basic requirements, such as being under 45 years of age, vocational english skills and appropriate qualifications and experience.
- ~ Pass the points test (discussed below).
- ~ Be on the Skilled Occupations List (urban and regional planners are on this list).

An overseas-qualified planner must have sufficient points to reach the pass mark for the particular type of visa category. For example for a planner who is sponsored by an Australian employer, the number of points required is “110”; for a planner seeking work independently in Australia, “115” points are required.

Varying points are awarded for criteria ranging from age (18 – 29 year olds obtain 30 points, 30 –34 year olds obtain 25 points), english skills (competent english obtains 20 points), specific work experience, spouse skills, and living in regional Australia (5 points).

Currently, urban and regional planners receive “50” points based on the inclusion of the profession on the Skilled Occupation List. But the points can increase by at least 10 (and potentially up to 15 points if you have a job offer from a firm employing more than 10 people) if urban and regional planners are listed on the Migration Occupations in Demand List. These additional points would make it much easier for an overseas planner to obtain the necessary points to work in Australia.<sup>16</sup>

As can be seen from the above description of the points system, the older and potentially the more experienced the planner, the less points are awarded for age, making it more imperative to gain the extra points from being on the Migration Occupations in Demand List.

To be included on the Migration Occupations in Demand List, the Minister for Employment and Workplace Relations has to undertake an assessment to determine whether there is an ongoing national shortage of urban and regional planners. If the Minister is satisfied of the shortage, a recommendation would be made to the Minister for Immigration and Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs, that urban and regional planners be included on the Migration Occupations in Demand List. If in agreement, the Minister for Immigration would gazette urban and regional planners on to this list.

## ■ GEOGRAPHY AND RELATED URBAN PLANNING SUBJECTS IN HIGH SCHOOLS

Informal discussions have been undertaken with the Geography Teachers Association and the Australian Geography Association, as geography is one of the primary feeder subjects into tertiary study of planning. There is general support for working closely with PIA to lift the profile of geography and related urban planning subjects within school curriculums. Geography is not generally taught as a separate subject in junior high schools but can be undertaken as a separate subject in senior years. There is no adopted national school curriculum, so each state delivers the subject in a different way. Recently the Federal Government investigated the teaching of “history” in schools and as a result history received additional funding.



(Source ACTPLA)



The overwhelming concern identified by the Inquiry is the effect that the shortage of planners is having on workplace morale and the efficiency of the planning system. This concern overshadows all others and its complexity will require a range of responses, some of which will take time to implement. As a consequence of the shortage, and also adding to the shortage of planners, are the issues contributing to the workplace stress being experienced by many planners.

The major findings of the Inquiry and suggested responses to the issues are discussed below. Many of these issues are linked together.

## 5.1 Shortage of planners

*“As the piles of applications mount, developers and the State Government complain about delays, communities become ever more demanding and anxious, experienced staff resign and councillors are tempted to shy away from ‘hard’ decisions. Alternatively, there may be attempts to reduce the backlog by taking shortcuts, perhaps resulting in some poor outcomes. Either way, this can become a vicious downward spiral with all concerned losing confidence that the system can deliver good results.”<sup>17</sup>*

By far the most significant employment issue that is facing the planning profession is the labour market shortage of planners. This shortage has major national implications in terms of the quality, timeliness and efficiency of the planning system to meet Australia’s needs now and in the future. It has implications for urban and regional planning, spanning all levels of government, the development industry, infrastructure service provision as well as for the well-being for the consulting services sector. The labour market shortage has had inevitable flow on effects to the profession, such as criticisms from the

private sector over delays for applications, stressful working environments, and “burn-out” of planners.

The shortage of planners, once confined to rural and regional Australia, is now evident in the major cities and their regions. In these places there are abundant employment choices for planners and opportunities to move out of the main stream planning area into related areas such as transport and social planning.

This shortage in the urban areas may well be a short to medium term problem with some debate about whether it will ease when development slows down. A number of submissions cautioned against overreacting to the shortage and causing an oversupply of planners in five to ten years time.

However the Inquiry’s research shows there will be a steady increase in demand for planners over the next 5 – 10 years. The reason for the supply problem is varied but includes the introduction of new planning legislation in some states/territories requiring more planners, increased development pressures, poor image or low profile of planning, planners working overseas, planners moving between employers and planners leaving the profession.

The actual number of vacancies is difficult to quantify but as stated earlier the data obtained from the Inquiry’s Questionnaire (191 respondents representing 1251 planners) indicates a vacancy rate over the last 3 years ranging from 13 - 19%. In the last six months this was at its highest level at 19%. As local governments employ the largest share of planners the problem is greatest within local government.

On a state/territory basis Table 11 summarizes information obtained about the planner shortage.

The rural and regional areas of Australia have been experiencing a long term problem with the supply of planners but because of unprecedented growth rates the major cities of Sydney, Brisbane and Melbourne have been experiencing moderate to critical shortages of planners. The Sydney

**TABLE 11 ~ Planner shortage by state/territory**

State/ Territory	Number of Planners (2001 Census)	Potential vacancies (SEE NOTE 1)	Number of new planning positions 5–10 years (SEE NOTE 2)	Other findings from Inquiry's research
NSW	1890	302	529	Rural and regional areas have had a long term moderate problem. Sydney region has been experiencing a critical shortage of planners, particularly within local government. There is a lot of movement between employers and overseas planners are being recruited.
Victoria	1296	207	363	Moderate supply problem in Melbourne and longer term moderate problem in rural/regional areas.
Qld	1026	164	287	Emerging critical problem within SEQ particularly within local governments and longer term moderate problem in rural/regional areas.
SA	292	47	82	Not a serious problem within Adelaide though a lot of movement between employers, but problems exist with attracting and retaining experienced planners to rural councils
WA	632	101	177	Supply has not met demand for 15 years; difficulties attracting & retaining planners in remote areas of the State.
Tas	120	19	34	Small number of vacancies but problems with attracting planners from interstate. Planning course only recommenced in 2003.
NT	60	10	17	Small number of vacancies in major centres but difficult to recruit from interstate. There are no local planning graduates.
ACT	81	13	23	Small number of vacancies with some problems recruiting. No local planning graduates.

**NOTES**

- 1 Based on Questionnaire findings of 16% average vacancy rate over the last 3 years
- 2 Based on Questionnaire findings of 28% increase in planning positions over the next 5-10 years

Region is the worst affected by the shortage. The labour market demand for planners in the major cities has placed an even greater strain on recruiting planners to rural and remote areas. Although the Inquiry did not obtain firm data there is anecdotal evidence that the coastal "sea change" communities undergoing unprecedented development are also experiencing problems attracting planners.

The labour market data indicates a significant increase in planner's salaries and evidence to the Inquiry indicates that salary packaging is now being used to compete for planners in a tight labor market. Packaging of vehicles in the salary and an attractive salary for young planners with limited experience has been noted. Although often the indicators of job satisfaction are more related to work conditions, type of work and

reward systems, the Inquiry's research shows that these factors may not always be present in some planning departments.

As mentioned earlier, some planning employers have already recruited overseas trained planners from South Africa, New Zealand and the United Kingdom. Others are reluctant to employ these planners as they lack knowledge of the local planning system, english language skills, or due to cultural differences. The visa requirements can be improved for overseas planners wishing to work in Australia by the profession being included on the "Migration Occupations in Demand List" by the Minister for Immigration.

## CASE STUDY

### OVERSEAS PLACEMENTS

In 2003 the National Capital Authority in Canberra, employed 2 planning assistants on a 6-month overseas scholarship program from Canada. One of the planning assistants continued on with the Authority. The Canadian interns worked as planning assistants.



(Source ACTPLA)

There has been comment that there is an adequate number of planning graduates being trained to meet the labour market demand. But whilst not quantified, it is evident that there is a significant "slippage" from the profession following graduation and by experienced planners, due to a range of factors including working overseas, working in other professions and leaving for family reasons.

For these reasons, an increase in the number of planners being trained at university is warranted, because of the findings that employers will be creating new planning positions in the future, in a situation where current demand is unmet. However any increase in student numbers has to be accompanied by adequate resources for the planning schools, as many currently have insufficient funding and teaching resources. In addition, secondary school students should be encouraged to study planning at university.

The Inquiry found there were a number of different areas that were being affected by this shortage and consequently different responses have been proposed:

### ■ SHORTAGE OF PLANNERS IN RURAL AND REGIONAL AUSTRALIA

The shortage of planners in rural and regional areas, mainly in local government, mirrors the problems faced by other professional groups (such as doctors and teachers). This shortage is a long-term problem with no clear short term solutions. The problem is being exacerbated by more recent shortages of planners in the larger metropolitan areas, competition from other industries for planners' skills and the higher salaries and conditions that can be offered in the cities.

Planners in rural and regional Australia are often involved with large scale planning issues, undertaking non-traditional planning tasks and going beyond town boundaries. They perform important roles in their communities such as regional economic development, natural resource planning and environmental management. The Inquiry recognizes there is a great diversity of

skills, experience and requirements for planners in regional centres, rural towns and remote areas of Australia.

A range of responses have been proposed to better use existing resources and encourage young and experienced planners out of the cities, including:

- Pooling planning resources and using private consultants.
- Training local people to take on planning administration tasks (such as the Certificate IV Course in Local Government (Planning)).
- Planning scholarships for rural/regional students.
- Promoting the benefits of working in rural/regional communities.
- Some form of bonding in return for financial support to work in rural and remote councils.

Other suggestions for retaining planners already in rural/regional areas (particularly younger people) is to have more accessible ongoing professional training such as courses on-line.

## CASE STUDY

### SHARING RESOURCES IN RURAL COUNCILS

In 1995 the Avondale Hotham Regional Planning Group, comprised of six wheat belt local councils, near Perth, commenced a highly successful program to share planning resources. In 2000 the workload became too great and the arrangement discontinued. However, Brookton and Beverley Shire Councils, members of the regional planning group, continue to share planning resources and the cost is apportioned on the basis of workload. Russell Reid the relieving Shire Planner said the “sharing works well and is the best use of scarce planning resources.” The councils in this regional group not only share planning resources but other Council functions such as Environmental Health Officer and Building Surveyor.

## CASE STUDY

### SCHOLARSHIPS FOR RURAL STUDENTS

A number of New South Wales rural councils offer small scholarships to school leavers in their communities, to pay for accommodation and study expenses whilst studying planning at the University of New England. Martin Auster, Program Co-ordinator for Urban and Regional Planning at the University said “that these scholarships have been successful in keeping locally trained planners in their communities. Planners who come from the rural areas are more likely to be attracted to work in these areas, than city based planners. These scholarships provide the incentive for high school students to take up planning studies and many Councils offer planning work for the students during the vacation breaks and ongoing work after graduation.” Martin said that he had been receiving an increasing number of inquiries from Councils about these scholarships as rural Councils struggle to recruit planners, and as the University also offers distance education, the inquiries had come from as far away as North Queensland.

University of New England planning student Tom Croft [below] received his scholarship certificate from the Mayor of Inverell, Barry Johnston. Tom's scholarship is worth \$2500 per year for two years, where he will spend six weeks with the council each year, gaining work experience.



(Source University of New England)

## ■ SHORTAGE OF EXPERIENCED PLANNERS

The results of the Inquiry's survey and other surveys undertaken<sup>18</sup> indicate that planning employers have the greatest problem in recruiting and retaining experienced planners (10 or more years experience), particularly with skills in development assessment.

*"Back in the 1970s, almost all planners were men<sup>19</sup>"* Although the representation of women in the planning profession has increased since the 1970s, many experienced female planners over 35 years, leave the profession. Women represent around 40% of graduates, but only 26% of planners over 35 years of age.

The shortage of experienced planners is due to:

- ~ Experienced planners leaving traditional planning areas to work in related areas (such as natural resource management, transport or social planning).
- ~ Experienced planners leaving the profession because of "burn-out" or morale issues.
- ~ Female planners over 35 years of age leaving the profession due to family commitments or other reasons and many choosing to work part-time (1 in 4 female planners work part-time).
- ~ Planners moving out of the technical area and into managerial positions being created to deal with new planning legislation or increased work loads.

This problem of a shortage of experienced planners will not be solved quickly but some of the proposed responses include:

- ~ Tapping in to experienced people in related professions (such as architects) by promoting postgraduate planning courses. In this regard, some related professions are also experiencing similar shortages so this proposal may be difficult.
- ~ Encouraging the large pool of female planners over 35 years of age (potentially around 570 planners) back in to planning with increased accessibility to flexible work practices such as working from home, contract or part-time work.

- ~ Similar to that proposed for rural/regional areas, support appropriate training courses for planning administrative assistants.

## CASE STUDY

### FLEXIBLE EMPLOYMENT

The Department of Local Government, Planning Sport and Recreation in Queensland, wherever possible, considers a range of employment arrangements in order to attract suitable potential employees. These include part time, contract, job exchange, job sharing, and secondments, and occasional work at home arrangements, especially for planners with family commitments, which prevent them from working full time.

Sue McCafferty is a Principal Planner with the Department and has over twenty-five years planning experience. She currently job shares a management position, overseeing the work of 10 planners in a regional planning team. Sue's observations are that *"There is now a growing acceptance to use part-time staff particularly in management positions, but this was not always the case. I had to work hard to prove the benefits and opportunities of using the skills and experience of part-time staff. There needs to be flexibility in work structures so skilled employees can continue to prove there is value in maintaining a range of employee arrangements."*



Sue McCafferty (right) together with Vanessa Neilson and Stephen Dredge from the Department

## ■ RETENTION OF GRADUATES

Graduate planners often have the choice of several planning positions when they finish their degrees and whilst studying. After graduation some are also choosing to work overseas. But information obtained through the workshops and submissions indicates that some young planners are disillusioned with the work they are doing because of a range of factors including stressful work places, unmet expectations of work, (particularly in development assessment) and a shortage of experienced planners in their workplaces who can offer guidance. For the long term health of the profession, planning graduates need to be encouraged to stay in the profession.

Some responses proposed include:

- ~ Increasing the number of graduates.
- ~ Mentoring planning graduates to provide support.
- ~ Traineeships or cadetships which offer structured supervision and guidance.

## CASE STUDY

### CADETSHIP

The City of Salisbury in Adelaide offers a 12 month Cadet Development Officer position for planning students in their 3rd year or higher of a Bachelor in Urban and Regional Planning or Graduate Diploma or Masters Degree. The Cadetship provides flexible working hours based on study commitments. Chantal Milton (photo to the right) is a Development Officer (Planning) with the Council and four years ago was the first Cadet through the program. *"This program gave me a foot in the door of a planning organisation and provided an incentive to finish my Masters Degree. The Council was very supportive and I was successful in getting a permanent position with the Council after the Cadetship finished."* Whilst a permanent position is not guaranteed at the end of the tenure, the Cadet is well placed to apply for such a position.

## ■ PLANNING ASSISTANTS

The National Questionnaire found that 40% of organisations were employing planning assistants but this was primarily due to a shortage of planners. The planning assistant was helping with research, public enquiries, report writing and routine development assessment. Research by the Department of Sustainability and Environment in Victoria found that the planning assistant was also capable of having knowledge of relevant legislation and planning schemes, a sound appreciation of the region and an ability to comprehend the impact of issues within the built environment.

The use of planning assistants has been put forward as a way to ease the shortage of planners, free up planners time to do more complex (and interesting work) and to provide skill training for administration staff. This is particularly the case for rural local governments where local people who have strong ties to their community can provide invaluable planning support in planning departments in councils. In Victoria, the Department of Sustainability and Environment sees the training of para-professionals as an important step in addressing planner supply issues. It will be reviewing the Certificate IV Course in Local Government (Planning), which is available under the Local Government Industry Training Board Package to make it relevant to the needs of that State. Likewise other states have also progressed down this path. PIA has provided input to development and recent review of this package.



The Inquiry did receive some advice cautioning against the endorsement of planning assistants due to:

- ~ Administrative support being reduced in some organisations in order to retain planning positions.
- ~ Resources should be placed into providing better systems and skills for planners rather than additional administration support.
- ~ Concern that planning assistants could take over work that should be done by a qualified planner.

With the current shortage of qualified planners the use of planning assistants will remain an essential element of many planning departments and the profession can play a role in ensuring suitable training programs are available.

## 5.2 Problems in the work place

*“Difficult employment conditions, particularly for local government planners, are having a detrimental effect on the contribution and influence of planners and the ability to attract high calibre applicants to the planning profession <sup>20</sup>.”*

The research of the Inquiry and by other surveys in other states (Victoria, Qld and SA) indicates a disturbing pattern of difficult work conditions for a large number of planners particularly those working in development assessment within local governments. Local government planners comprise nearly half the practicing planners. In 2001 there were close to 2700 local government planners in Australia and the majority of these would have some involvement in development assessment.

The problem is worse in areas which are experiencing high levels of growth. In these situations planners face a multitude of pressures from elected representatives, developers, members of the community, legislative time frames and limited human and financial resources.

It was evident that planners can have difficulties raising some of these concerns in the public arena because they may compromise their current or future positions of employment

At the present time there are few avenues open to planners, to seek outside assistance or counsel on these matters. Some planners choose not to stay in these workplaces, whilst others with limited choices continue to persevere under difficult conditions. Less experienced planners are particularly vulnerable. Not surprisingly then, the survey of 34 young planners undertaken as part of the Young Planners Network submission to the Inquiry, indicated the majority considered they were working under stressful work environments due to a combination of planner shortages and the roles planners perform.

The side effects of these “toxic” workplaces are felt across the profession leading to:

- ~ Poor image of planning profession, often because of inaccurate media reporting and lack of understanding of legislative processes.
- ~ Poor image of local governments, and local governments as a desirable place to work.
- ~ Perceived ineffectiveness of the profession because of inadequate professional body responses to high profile cases of planners under pressure, or controversial planning decisions.
- ~ Planners becoming disillusioned with the profession and the impact this was having on young planners.

Organisations such as the Australian and state/territory local government associations are addressing some of these issues as they also affect other professions within local government.

The Inquiry is also mindful that the national review of development assessment, being conducted by the Development Assessment Forum, is still underway. There are similar themes being addressed through that process. There were also different issues raised about development assessment concerns, reflecting the diversity of planning regimes and cultures.

One state has made provisions to clearly separate the policy role of elected councillors and their decision-making powers. In South Australia, the Government has established Development Assessment Panels, which impartially assess applications against the policies of the council. The Development Assessment Panels comprise seven members appointed by the council of which only three are elected members. Panel members need to disclose conflict of interests and financial interests as well as abide by a Code of Conduct. Under these conditions, elected members are able to take on an advocacy role for their community.

There were other comments made that not only pointed to more complex legislation being the problem, but over-regulation by planners themselves, with one senior planner saying:

*“My experience suggests a nasty “destructive spiral” caused by new planning schemes being made unnecessarily complex, containing too much padding and basically over regulating development unnecessarily. This over regulation then captures a much wider range of applications in the net requiring the highest level of public consultation and development assessment. This in turn increases workloads on DA teams and planning committees, creates demand for much more red tape and paper work, increases costs for everyone and leads to delays. All of this then upsets applicants who then take out their frustration on council staff, elected representatives and council Mayors, leads to complaints to Planning Ministers, and so on goes the spiral”*

Clearly there are many issues affecting the management of the development assessment functions of councils. The scope of this Inquiry can only examine broad issues and themes in this regard.

The suggested responses to the Inquiry have been varied and include:

- ~ Separate the policy and assessment powers of elected representatives (such as the South Australia proposal above).
- ~ Promote less “Red Tape” in planning documents.
- ~ Better delineation between the planner’s role and that of elected representatives.
- ~ Training elected representatives to understand the planning process and their responsibilities.
- ~ Increased advocacy role and support in work place situations.
- ~ Developing Guidelines or Codes to govern work place practices.
- ~ Increased support and resources for development assessment planners, by PIA.

## CASE STUDY

### TRAINING OTHERS IN THE PLANNING SYSTEM

The Course Advisory Board for the School of Geography and Environmental Studies at the University of Tasmania identified a need for short training courses in statutory and strategic planning, targeted at local government, state government and non government organisation staff who engage with planning functions but are not specialist planners themselves. A specific course will be developed over the next two years to address the need for this planning training within Tasmania. The course is being developed on a co-operative basis between the Resource Planning Development Commission and the University of Tasmania.



(Source ACTPLA)



## 5.3 Education and training concerns

*“The community is also more demanding of the planning system than it previously was – this raises pressure on planning professionals and heightens the need for skill development in ‘non-traditional’ areas (eg conflict resolution)<sup>21</sup>”*

The training and education of planners has always been considered an important issue by the profession, but is now becoming increasingly critical because of:

- ~ The introduction of new planning legislation in some states/territories, requiring training on the new system.
- ~ Greater development pressure and more complex urban developments coupled with more litigation.
- ~ Inexperienced planners not receiving adequate on-the-job training due to a shortage of experienced planners.
- ~ Planners moving into new disciplines (such as social, environment and transport planning), which require different skills.
- ~ Higher expectations by the community, elected representatives and the development community on what the planning system can deliver.

It is also recognised that planners need to keep up to date with their training and that recent graduates will be on a steep learning curve in the first few years of employment. Graduates who had undertaken work experience during their planning degree were better placed in the first few years of employment.

### ■ SKILLS OF PLANNERS

The National Questionnaire found that generally the main skills of planners will remain the same for the next five to ten years; skills include development assessment, strategic planning, environmental planning, urban design, transport planning, regional planning and transport planning.

The Inquiry received information, particularly from outside the profession, that planners should have better skills in some areas including:

- ~ Project management – especially dealing with complex proposals.
- ~ Development assessment.
- ~ Better understanding of how the private sector operates.
- ~ Negotiation and communication.
- ~ Urban design – currently there are limited courses available but this is emerging as an important skill for planners.

The Young Planners Network also supported these observations citing increased skills required in negotiation, conflict management and resolution, project management, practical “how to” knowledge and planning law.

There were mixed views about whether university graduates should have a high level of these skills or whether many of these skills were best learned on the job and through continuing professional development. Generally it was felt that university courses cover most of these topics in their curriculum but this should be investigated in more detail when the courses are reviewed for accreditation. Courses that had on the job training and practical subjects were well placed to deliver skilled graduates at the end of their course. It was also noted by a university academic that many of these skills are best taught at university in a holistic way as part of the broader delivery of planning skills.

The limited availability of urban design courses is a concern to the profession particularly as these skills are becoming more sought after and the options for delivery of these skills should be investigated further. PIA is seeking to establish an Urban Design Chapter to provide a means for promoting better design within the profession and recognize design as a planning related discipline.

## ■ UNIVERSITY PLANNING SCHOOLS

Information given to the Inquiry indicates that the majority of the thirteen planning schools that have accredited planning courses have healthy enrolment figures, particularly for postgraduate planning courses. In the year 2000, there were approximately 2100 students enrolled in planning<sup>22</sup>. This has not always been the case, with some planning schools having difficulties in the past filling their undergraduate quotas.

In some states however, there is a view that graduate intake numbers should be higher to meet the market demands for planners but this would have to be accompanied by an increase in teaching and support resources. Internal university quotas dictate the number of places available for planning students and the university councils would need to be convinced of the merits of increasing places for planning students. An increase in student numbers at planning schools can be justified given the current shortage of planners and the increased demand for planners over the next five to ten years, as discussed earlier.

Some planning schools have lost some status by being incorporated into much larger departments and many are having difficulties obtaining adequate resources and staffing levels. Some universities also report problems in recruiting suitably qualified teaching staff and there are low numbers of Ph.D. candidates in planning which has been the traditional source of university lecturers.

It is difficult to generalize responses as each planning school has different issues and the Australian New Zealand Association of Planning Schools regularly discusses course content, current practice and issues concerning planning schools. The RTPI (UK) report on Initial Planning Education has many findings and recommendations that should be given due consideration, for their relevance to Australian planning schools.

What has also become apparent to the Inquiry is the need for planning agencies (such as PIA and Planning Officials Group) to work much more



University of Queensland, Bachelor of Regional and Town Planning students

closely with local planning schools to ensure the schools receive support and assistance with obtaining appropriate levels of funding and resources commensurate with the needs of the local profession.

Also important was the continued need for planners in the profession to contribute to delivery of lectures to planning students and for the profession to continue to support work place experience for planning students.

## ■ VOCATIONAL TRAINING

There is now a range of courses available at TAFE's and delivered by other providers. These courses can offer upgraded skills for practicing planners or skills for administrative support staff in planning departments.

The Inquiry received a number of comments about the usefulness of these courses but also concerns that:

- ~ There was no monitoring or oversight (particularly quality control) of these courses.
- ~ There was little interface between the profession and these course providers.

There was general support for the planning profession to take a greater involvement in the delivery of these courses.

## ■ CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Many issues were raised about continuing professional development (CPD) including:

- ~ It was difficult for many planners to attend CPD because they cannot get time away from their work place.
- ~ Planners from rural/regional areas are disadvantaged by not having accessible training.
- ~ The cost of attending some CPD courses is becoming an issue.
- ~ CPD training is required for PIA membership but not enforced, with no rigorous monitoring or penalties for non-compliance.
- ~ There is no clear framework for CPD training (ie matching identified training needs with PIA and other providers delivery of courses, lectures or seminars).

Some of the suggestions for addressing these issues were:

- ~ Delivery of courses on-line to allow rural/regional planners to update their skills.
- ~ More active participation and co-ordination by PIA in consultation with state and territory governments and universities in CPD.

There was debate about whether CPD should be compulsory for PIA members. Some believed this would deter planners from joining PIA and membership fees would increase to pay for the additional costs of administering CPD records. However enforcement would ensure that planners keep up to date with their skills.

## ■ ACCREDITATION OF PLANNERS

The accreditation of planners was also raised in the context of having agreed standards of competency across Australia, including training. The Department of Sustainability and Environment in Victoria has completed a project developing competency standards for a Planning Manager, Team Leader, Senior Planner, Planner, Assistant Planner and Planning Enforcement Officer. It believes that PIA should reflect these competency levels in its membership grades.

In Queensland, there has been recent discussion about the benefits of registering town planners to make the profession more efficient and to protect the consumer. The proposal includes that the title “town planner” should be protected by law, and only used by suitable qualified people <sup>23</sup>.

Other professions such as architects and landscape architects have professional registration processes in place. For example, the Australian Institute of Landscape Architects has established a Landscape Professions Registration Board of Australia; primarily to self regulate practicing landscape architects in Australia. The requirements for registration are - corporate membership of the Institute, five years minimum experience and compulsory on-going professional training <sup>24</sup>.

A similar proposal to accredit members of the Institute would ensure required standards of professional practice were maintained for planners.

## ■ GEOGRAPHY AND RELATED URBAN PLANNING SUBJECT AT HIGH SCHOOLS

The promotion of planning and other subjects relevant to planning (such as environment and economics) was also raised in the context of needing to lift the profile of geography in high schools. Even if geography students didn't go on to study planning they would take an understanding of spatial planning systems with them into their future careers or as active members of their communities (such as elected representatives or advocates). In this regard there is support from peak geography associations to work with the planning profession to improve the status of geography in high schools.

There was also support for increased promotion of planning as a profession to school children.

## 5.4 Need to promote planning and the profession

There was general support to have a concerted campaign to lift the profile and understanding of planners and planning in general. This was seen as a way to attract young people in to the profession and give people who interact with the planning system (such as developers, community and elected representatives) a better understanding of the roles, pressures and responsibilities of planners.

Some states/territories have already commenced successful campaigns by way of school visits, media promotion, and printing of brochures or CD's. This information could be shared to avoid duplication. PIA, together with other planning agencies was viewed as the best placed organisation to lead this promotion.

## 5.5 Implications for key organisations involved with planning

*"View expressed that PIA does not represent local government<sup>25</sup>"*

*"Planning Ministers and state/territory planning agencies need to become more directly involved in issues relating to the recruitment and retention of planning professionals within the whole planning systems of their respective systems<sup>26</sup>"*

Based on the Inquiry's findings it is evident that there should be some changes in the way peak planning organisations are currently involved in issues affecting the planning profession, particularly the shortage of planners and the associated flow on effects to morale and the efficiency of the planning system. It is also essential to establish better working relationships between these organisations and to have a co-ordinated national response.

### ■ COMMONWEALTH GOVERNMENT

Whilst there is a current argument that the Commonwealth Government should have a national planning agenda, the Inquiry found that there was a role for the Commonwealth to:

- ~ Recognise the planning profession as an Occupation in Demand, to make it easier for overseas planners to work in Australia.
- ~ Provide greater resources and funding for university planning schools, and increase the number of funded places for planning students. The Inquiry acknowledges that each university determines the funding allocation for its planning school, but recognition by the Commonwealth Government of the importance of planning courses may assist increased funding.

### ■ STATE/TERRITORY PLANNING AGENCIES - PLANNING OFFICIALS GROUP

State and territory governments develop, implement and monitor the planning legislation for their respective jurisdictions and therefore have a vested interest in ensuring the planning system runs efficiently. They also employ around 22% of planners. To date there have been varied responses by the state/territory governments to the current concerns of the planning profession and whilst the comments below are generalizations, they reflect the broad sentiments of members of the profession.

The Inquiry's findings in relation to the role that state/territory governments should have in planning employment and education are:

- ~ To ensure that state/territory legislation, planning schemes and policies minimize "Red Tape" and complexity, as much as possible.
- ~ Support models that improve the development assessment process.
- ~ Support training for councillors on their roles and responsibilities under the planning system.

- ~ Take a more active leadership role with CPD, retention of planners and image of planning for the state/territory and work with other planning organisations to address the issues

## ■ AUSTRALIAN AND STATE/ TERRITORY LOCAL GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATIONS

Local government is the largest employer of planners (close to 50%) and is the sector experiencing the greatest shortage of planners. Local governments implement the planning legislation, represent their local communities and are located in all parts of Australia. PIA has recently established the Local Government Planners Network to better address the needs of local government planners but further work needs to be done to adequately represent their interests.

These suggested responses have been brought forward to the Inquiry and are presented on the understanding that local governments already have a diverse response to these issues. The findings suggest that local government should:

- ~ Take a lead role and with others (PIA and state/territory governments) work to improve the working conditions for planners, particularly development assessment planners, with a range of strategies including support for training, flexible work practices, resourcing, and clear relationships with elected representatives.
- ~ Work with others to address planner supply (particularly encouraging traineeships and sharing planning staff).
- ~ Ensure that planning schemes do not over regulate development and create overly complex procedures.

## ■ PRIVATE SECTOR PLANNING EMPLOYERS

Planning consultants are the second largest employer of planners (30% of the total) and are often being used to supplement planning staff within local governments such as outsourced policy and development assessment work. Many consultancies now have off-shore projects.

The findings of the Inquiry are that planning consultants should:

- ~ Continue to support teaching programs at universities, particularly imparting knowledge of private sector operations to planning students.
- ~ Ensure their staff receive appropriate access to training.
- ~ Work with others to address the shortage of planners, especially in the area of flexible work practices.
- ~ Support the university by employing planning students for work experience.

## ■ UNIVERSITY PLANNING SCHOOLS

Universities train planning professionals, undertake research and contribute to and lead debate on current planning issues.

Some responses that have been provided to the Inquiry include:

- ~ Universities to continue to review, with input from others in the profession, course content to ensure it meets the needs of the profession.
- ~ With the assistance of the key planning agencies, address the planner supply issue in areas such as enrolment numbers, scholarships for rural/remote students, work place placements to rural/regional areas and the private sector.

## ■ PLANNING INSTITUTE OF AUSTRALIA

The Inquiry found that there were high expectations that PIA will lead the response to many of the concerns raised during this Inquiry. However in reality, current practices, structures and resources available to PIA do not match these expectations.

The Inquiry found that PIA has a legitimate role in:

- ~ Overseeing the response to the shortage of planners particularly in the areas of visas.
- ~ Advocacy for planners in difficult work place situations.
- ~ Co-ordination and providing a framework for CPD.
- ~ Promoting the planning profession to improve its image.
- ~ Work with key organisations to improve the status of geography in schools.
- ~ Networking more closely with key agencies and working more closely with state/territory governments.



(Source ACTPLA)

## 6 Recommendations

The Inquiry makes the following recommendations to address the major issues around planning education and employment, based on the findings and suggested responses.

The agency that should take an active role in implementing the recommendation is highlighted in bold after the recommendation. The key to the abbreviations is:

- C** Commonwealth Government
- LG** Australian and State based, Local Government Associations
- PIA** Planning Institute of Australia
- PS** Private Sector Planning Employers
- SG** State/Territory Government Planning Agencies represented by the Planning Officials Group
- U** University Planning Schools

### 6.1 Overcoming the shortage of planners

The Inquiry has established that there is a shortage of planners, with a vacancy rate over the last 3 years of between 13 – 19%, the highest rate being in the last 6 months. It is one of the most significant issues facing the planning profession. This labour market shortage is critical in the major cities and their regions (Brisbane, Melbourne and Sydney) and is a long term problem in the rural and regional areas of Australia. It is most severe for local government employers, as they employ the greatest number of planners.

It is impacting on the morale and image of the profession because of the problems created when the planning system is under resourced. This issue must be addressed by targeted actions for particular areas of shortage.



(Source ACTPLA)

## ■ SHORTAGE OF PLANNERS - GENERAL

**FINDINGS:** As well as the current shortage, there will be a growing increase in the number of planners required in the next 5 – 10 years, even if there is a slow down in economic activity. Because of the high level of ‘drop out’ after a few years of work, the Inquiry felt there should be an increase in undergraduate places. Incentives need to be offered to retain, attract, and train more planners.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

- 6.1.1** Universities increase the number of fully funded places for planning students with commensurate increase in resources for the planning schools, to improve the long term labour market supply of planners (U)
- 6.1.2** The Commonwealth Government include the planning profession on the “Migration Occupations in Demand List” allowing overseas-qualified planners to more readily meet visa requirements and work in Australia (C)
- 6.1.3** Encourage employers to pay for fees for planning employers undertaking postgraduate planning courses (SG, LG, PS)
- 6.1.4** Make available cadetships for undergraduate planning students (SG, LG, PS)
- 6.1.5** Offer programs at university planning schools for students from specific target groups including indigenous Australians, rural/regional communities and from states/territories that do not have planning courses (U)
- 6.1.6** Improve the profile of geography and associated planning subjects and promote the planning profession, in secondary schools, to attract more school students to study planning at university (PIA with U)

## ■ SHORTAGE OF PLANNERS IN RURAL AND REGIONAL AREAS

**FINDINGS:** The supply of planners for rural/regional areas of Australia has been a long term problem but is now being exacerbated by the shortage in the major cities. Many of these areas require an adequate supply of planning resources for a range of complex planning tasks such as environmental and natural resource planning. Better use of existing planning resources and encouraging more planners to move to rural/regional Australia is recommended.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

- 6.1.7** State and local governments find innovative ways to maximize planning resources including sharing or pooling planners in rural and regional Australia where there is an identified shortage (SG, LG)
- 6.1.8** Encourage rural and regional councils to provide financial support to planning students from their communities (LG)
- 6.1.9** Require rural/regional planning to be part of undergraduate training and encourage work experience in rural/regional areas (U)



## ■ SHORTAGE OF EXPERIENCED PLANNERS

**FINDINGS:** Experienced planners are particularly in short supply and need to be retained and attracted back into the workforce. There are potentially 570 qualified female planners over the age of 35 no longer working in planning and there are opportunities for related professionals to obtain postgraduate planning qualifications.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

**6.1.10** Encourage people in related professions (such as architects and engineers) to obtain postgraduate planning qualifications (PIA)

**6.1.11** Monitor the extent to which fees may be impacting on post graduate planning student numbers (**PIA** with **U**)

**6.1.12** Ensure that flexible working conditions are available, particularly within local governments, to support qualified and experienced female planners back into the workforce (**LG** with **PIA**)

## ■ RETAINING GRADUATES IN THE PLANNING PROFESSION

**FINDINGS:** Generally there is an adequate supply of planning graduates, but though not able to be quantified there is significant loss of young planners from the profession. Planning graduates can get disillusioned with planning because they work in difficult work places and do not receive appropriate supervision and support because of work pressures and shortage of staff. For the long term future of the profession there is a need to retain and support planning graduates.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

**6.1.13** Develop a mentor program for young graduates as part of PIA membership and encourage mentor programs within their organisations (**PIA**)

**6.1.14** Require appropriate structured training and support to be provided by planning employers, for planning graduates (**SG, LG, PS** with **PIA**)

## ■ INCREASED ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT BY PLANNING ASSISTANT

**FINDINGS:** The Inquiry acknowledges the important role that planning assistants are currently performing in the workplace in assisting the planner with tasks such as public counter inquiries, research, routine development assessment and report writing. The Inquiry sees a need to manage the training of planning assistants at a national level.

### RECOMMENDATION

**6.1.15** Implement Certificate IV courses in Local Government (Planning) as appropriate for each State/Territory (**SG**)

## 6.2 Addressing work place problems

The Inquiry found a disturbing pattern of difficult work place conditions for many planners due to high volume of work, statutory timeframes, over regulation, pressure from developers, elected representatives and the community, lack of resources and a shortage of planning staff. Development assessment planners within local government have the most difficult work places.

This is affecting the ability of planners to perform their jobs and in turn the image of planning. Many planners feel the profession is not doing enough to assist them with work place problems and others have moved out of planning into related or other professions.

The Inquiry believes these concerns are seriously affecting the long-term health of the profession and the shortage of planners, and need discussing and addressing by the all planning employers and PIA.

### ■ IMPROVING WORK PLACES FOR PLANNERS

**FINDINGS:** Work places need to improve otherwise the situation will get worse for the shortage of planners and the morale of the profession. Clear guidelines backed up with training, for users of the planning system as well as a variety of support systems for planners need to be in place.

#### RECOMMENDATIONS

- 6.2.1** Develop a Code of Conduct, which provides guidance to politicians, users of the planning system and planning staff on their roles and responsibilities (**LG** with **PIA**, **SG**)
- 6.2.2** Review PIA Code of Professional Conduct in light of the Inquiry's findings (**PIA**)
- 6.2.3** Establish a telephone help line for use by planners who find themselves in difficult work place situations, with the possibility of using "Fellows" of the Institute to provide confidential advice (**PIA**)
- 6.2.4** Require all local governments to have Employee Assistance Schemes in place (**LG**)
- 6.2.5** Undertake a two yearly review of planners' salaries relative to other professions and publish these results for members (**PIA**)

### ■ IMPROVING THE PLANNING SYSTEM

**FINDINGS:** Many planners experience inappropriate political influence in their workplaces. The Inquiry believes that a good model for an improved development assessment system is the Development Assessment Panels being proposed in South Australia. Councillors also require appropriate training so they understand their role and responsibilities in the planning system. Greater technical support can be provided especially for planners working in isolated areas.

#### RECOMMENDATIONS

- 6.2.6** The Planning Institute of Australia support the Development Assessment Forum, which seeks to improve the current development assessment process (**PIA**)
- 6.2.7** All local government councillors involved in development assessment be required to undertake compulsory training on their planning roles and responsibilities, in accordance with a simple Code of Conduct (**SG** with **LG**)

## 6.3 Improving education and training

The Inquiry found that education and training has become increasingly important for planners as legislation is changing and becoming more complex, the role of the planner is changing requiring new skills, and planners are moving in to related professions.

The Inquiry's main recommendations for education and training focus on increased co-ordination between training providers and the profession and closer monitoring by the professional body. Improvement in some skills is also recommended.

### ■ GENERAL SKILLS OF PLANNERS

**FINDINGS:** Generally university planning courses were providing appropriate training for graduates though has some concern about development assessment, urban design skills and some generic skills such as project management and negotiation. A national education committee would provide better links between the planning profession and planning educators, be able to review the current PIA education policy and make any recommendations for change to training and education of planners.

#### RECOMMENDATIONS

- 6.3.1** PIA establish a National Education and Professional Development Committee comprising practitioners and academics that can provide advice on the content and delivery of professional education and training (**PIA**)
- 6.3.2** National Education and Professional Development Committee review the PIA Code of Recognition of Planning Courses and Education Policy in light of the recommendations in this report (including the RTPI UK report on Education) (**PIA**)
- 6.3.3** National Education and Professional Development Committee review how development assessment, urban design skills and generic skills such as negotiation and project management are being taught at university (**PIA**)
- 6.3.4** Planning employers provide appropriate financial or in kind resources to support continued professional development of their planning staff (**SG, LG, PS**)

### ■ CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

**FINDINGS:** A more professional approach to the development and maintenance of the skills of planners is warranted. Accreditation of planners would provide the profession with greater standing and quality control.

#### RECOMMENDATIONS

- 6.3.5** The Planning Institute of Australia examine accrediting individual planners, expand its education training and professional development role and work with employers to recognize, support and develop professional planning staff (**PIA**)
- 6.3.6** Establish a free central register of links (on PIA's web site) of available courses for planning assistants and courses available for experienced planners, particularly those working in rural/regional areas (PIA)professional development of their planning staff (**SG, LG, PS**)

## 6.4 Promoting planning and the profession

**FINDINGS:** The Inquiry found that in some cases there were poor perceptions of planning and little understanding of the contribution that planners make to the development of our cities and regions. There was a general call from members of the profession for better marketing and promotion of planning and the profession.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

- 6.4.1** PIA and other interested groups including academic and employer groups, promote the planning profession and benefits of planning (**PIA**)



(Source ACTPLA)

## 7 Implementation

The Inquiry has found significant concerns amongst planning professionals and has identified a substantial number of recommendations to address the issues. These will require commitment by all identified parties and without this the situation will only deteriorate.

Feedback on the Consultation Draft Report highlighted that now the issues and problems have been identified, there was strong support amongst the planning profession to move forward and implement the Inquiry's recommendations. For some issues implementation has already commenced; the National Council of PIA has agreed to investigate models for accreditation of planners.

The Inquiry wants to ensure that this report is not the end of action, but rather appropriate mechanisms are put in place to implement the recommendations and to keep education and employment issues on the agenda.

The full list of recommendations of the Inquiry has been listed below, with respective actions, responsibilities and timeframes. This provides a guide to how the recommendations should be implemented.

### 7.1 Co-ordination and resourcing of the implementation

The Inquiry's recommendations cover education and employment issues across a number of jurisdictions, and for this reason the Inquiry believes key agencies with an interest in planning should be involved in the implementation of the Inquiry's recommendations including:

- ~ Australian and State-based, Local Government Associations
- ~ State/Territory Government Planning Agencies represented by the Planning Officials Group
- ~ Planning Institute of Australia
- ~ Private Sector Planning Employers
- ~ University Planning Schools
- ~ Commonwealth Government

These agencies all have a vested interest in the future of planning, adequate staffing of the planning system, appropriate training of planners and better workplace environments for planners.

In order to facilitate the implementation of the recommendations given the range of agencies identified, the Inquiry believes that PIA is the best-placed organisation to oversee the implementation process, working in partnership with the agencies listed above.

The Inquiry considers that in 2004-05, at least \$70 000 will be necessary to provide adequate staffing (at least one full time equivalent) and administrative support to successfully oversee implementation of the recommendations of the Inquiry. An Education and Employment Officer should be appointed to oversee implementation. The PIA has already committed some of the funds necessary to support a part-time officer and has agreed to provide office accommodation, administrative support and assistance through its National Secretariat in Canberra.

The PIA Honorary National Education Convenor, the PIA Education and Professional Development Committee and other office bearers have also volunteered to assist with implementation tasks.

The Inquiry therefore strongly recommends that PIA be the coordinating agency with additional funding, involvement and support being provided by other partner agencies as per the recommendations below:

Key Recommendation	Action	Responsibility	Timeframe
PIA oversee the implementation of all recommendations of the Inquiry's report	Education and Employment Officer to work with the CEO, PIA National Council and partner agencies to oversee implementation	CEO of PIA and National President	June 2005

## 7.2 Addressing shortage of planners

The Inquiry found that the shortage of planners is one of the most critical issues facing the profession and needs to be addressed with a range of strategies. Involvement of a number of partner agencies with PIA is required to ensure a comprehensive approach to the shortage of planners.

Therefore the Inquiry suggests a national committee be established to improve the supply of planners:

- ~ PIA National Council establish an Education and Professional Development Committee comprising PIA office bearers, planning practitioners and academics, to oversee recommendations of addressing the shortage of planners.
- ~ PIA National Council to re-consider the current role of the Honorary Education Convenor in light of the establishment of an Education and Professional Development Committee.

The Education and Professional Development Committee would also be responsible for overseeing the implementation of recommendations addressing education and training issues.

The Education and Professional Development Committee, together with the Education Convenor and support from PIA officer bearers should implement the following recommendations to address the shortage of planners:

Key Recommendation	Action	Responsibility	Timeframe
Universities increase the number of fully funded places for planning students	PIA establish an Education Committee	PIA Hon Education Convenor	January 2005
The Commonwealth Government include the planning profession on the "Migration Occupations in Demand List"	Prepare submission to & strongly lobby Commonwealth	CEO & Education and Employment Officer	January 2005
Make available cadetships for undergraduate planning students	Write to state/territory governments and employer groups	Education and Employment Officer	

Key Recommendation	Action	Responsibility	Timeframe
<p>Encourage employers to pay for HECS fees for planning employees undertaking undergraduate &amp; postgraduate planning courses</p> <p>Require appropriate structured training and support to be provided by planning employers, for planning graduates</p>	Write to major employer groups	Education and Employment Officer	June 2005
<p>Offer programs at university planning schools for students from specific target groups including indigenous Australians, rural/regional communities and from states/territories that do not have planning courses</p> <p>Require rural/regional planning to be part of undergraduate training and encourage work experience in rural/regional areas)</p>	Contact and work with university planning schools, Deans & through Australian Vice Chancellor's Committee	Hon Education Convenor	November 2004
<p>Improve the profile of geography and associated planning subjects and promote the planning profession, in secondary schools, to attract more school students to study planning at university</p>	Establish partnership and action plan with geography teachers	Education and Employment Officer	November 2004
<p>State and local governments find innovative ways to maximize planning resources including sharing or pooling planners in rural and regional Australia where there is an identified shortage</p>	Contact state and local governments to discuss issues	Education and Employment Officer	January 2005
<p>Encourage people in related professions (such as architects and engineers) to obtain postgraduate planning qualifications</p>	Promote through related professional associations	Education and Employment Officer	July 2004 & ongoing

Key Recommendation	Action	Responsibility	Timeframe
Encourage rural and regional councils to provide financial support to planning students from their communities  Ensure that flexible working conditions are available, particularly within local governments, to support qualified and experienced female planners back into the workforce	Prepare joint action plan with Australian Local Government Association	Education and Employment Officer	January 2005
Monitor the extent to which fees may be impacting on post graduate planning student numbers	Establish monitoring system for fees (integrate with PIA Visiting Boards role)	Hon Education Convenor with Education Committee	July 2004 & ongoing
Develop a mentor program for young graduates as part of PIA membership and encourage mentor programs within their organisations	Investigate and establish models for mentoring	Education and Employment Officer with Young Planners Network	January 2005
Implement Certificate IV courses in Local Government (Planning) as appropriate for each State/Territory	Liaise with providers and obtain commitment from state/territory governments	Education and Employment Officer & Hon Education Convenor	January 2005



## 7.3 Addressing work place issues

“Toxic” work places are having a detrimental effect on many planners, the profession and the planning system, particularly for planners in local government development assessment areas.

The Inquiry recommends that a Task Force with a range of representatives be established as detailed below:

- ~ PIA National Council establish a Workplace Task Force to oversee implementation of the major recommendations with representatives from PIA Office Bearers, Australian Local Government Association (ALGA), Local Government Managers Association (LGMA) and the Local Government Planners Network (LGPN).

The Workplace Task Force, assisted by partner agencies and PIA Officers should implement the following recommendations:

Key Recommendation	Action	Responsibility	Timeframe
The Planning Institute of Australia support the Development Assessment Forum (DAF), which seeks to improve the current Development Assessment Process	PIA represented on National Development Assessment Forum	CEO & National President	August 2005
All local government councillors involved in development assessment be required to undertake compulsory training on their planning roles and responsibilities, in accordance with a simple Code of Conduct  Require all local governments to have Employee Assistance Schemes in place	Submission and joint action plan with ALGA	Education and Employment Officer with Local Government Planners Network  CEO & Education and Employment Officer	January 2005
Develop a Code of Conduct, which provides guidance to politicians, users of the planning system and planning staff on their roles and responsibilities	Devise code in consultation with ALGA, DAF, LGMA, PIA LGPN & PIA Education Committee	LGPN Convenor & CEO PIA for PIA National Council	December 2004
Review PIA Code of Professional Conduct in light of the Inquiry's findings	Seek member & interested party feedback on existing Code and review	Education and Employment Officer	December 2004
Establish a telephone help line for use by planners who find themselves in difficult work-place situations, with the possibility of using “Fellows” of the Institute to provide confidential advice	Investigate feasibility of telephone hot-line	Education and Employment Officer	November 2004
Undertake a two yearly review of planner's salaries relative to other professions and publish these results for members	Access Australian Bureau of Statistics data & speak to recruitment agencies & publish results	Education and Employment Officer	June 2006

## 7.4 Improving education and training

The planning profession needs to have a much more professional and rigorous approach to continuing professional development; for instance identified skill gaps should be matched with appropriate training. Furthermore, university planning schools should be teaching the skills required for young planners to operate effectively in the workforce.

The Inquiry therefore proposes that the PIA National Education & Professional Development Committee, to be established to address recommendations to address the shortage of planners, also provide advice on the content and delivery of professional development, education and training. As these two issues are closely linked together, and to avoid duplication of action, one PIA co-ordinated committee is proposed to address both sets of recommendations.

The National Education and Professional Development Committee, with support from the Honorary Education Convenor, PIA Officers and partner agencies should implement the following recommendations:

Key Recommendation	Action	Responsibility	Timeframe
Planning employers provide appropriate financial or in kind resources to support continued professional development of their planning staff	Submission to planning employers	Hon Education Convenor	June 2004
National Education and Professional Development Committee review the PIA Code of Recognition of Planning Courses and Education Policy in light of the recommendations in this report (including the RTPI UK report on Education)	Review the Code	Committee & Hon Education Convenor	December 2004
National Education and Professional Development Committee review how development assessment, urban design skills and generic skills such as negotiation and project management are being taught at university	Seek input from others on university courses via university visiting boards or other means	Committee & Hon Education Convenor	December 2004
The Planning Institute of Australia examine accrediting individual planners, expand its education training and professional development role and work with employers to recognize, support and develop professional planning staff	Investigate models for accreditation. Liaise with state/territory governments for legislative issues	National President & Division Presidents	June 2005

Key Recommendation	Action	Responsibility	Timeframe
Establish a free central register of links (on PIA's web site) of available courses for planning assistants and courses available for experienced planners, particularly those working in rural/regional areas	Investigate proposal for page on PIA web-site	Education and Employment Officer	September 2004

## 7.5 Promoting planning and the profession

The Inquiry found that planning and the planning profession generally suffered from a low and sometimes unfavorable media profile. PIA together with partner agencies should work together to improve the perception of the value of planning and the planning profession generally.

Accordingly the Inquiry suggests the following PIA organisational response:

- ~ The PIA President together with PIA Member Services Committee and partner agencies further develop strategies for and quickly step up action plans to market and promote the planning profession.

Key Recommendation	Action	Responsibility	Timeframe
PIA and other interested groups including academic and employer groups, promote the planning profession and benefits of planning	Prepare strategic and action plans for increasing visibility, media coverage and understanding of planners and planning issues	PIA CEO and Marketing Officer, member services committee and interested academic and employer groups.	July 2004

## 7.6 Reporting and review

The Inquiry recommends that the Education and Employment Officer, once appointed, provide regular reports on the progress of implementation to the PIA CEO, National Council and these be publicized via PIA email broadcasts and media outlets, as well as via partner agencies in particular to the Planning Officials Group and other professional associations in with an interest in the built environment.

It is further recommended that the PIA National Council undertake a stocktake of the progress of implementation, any issues arising and new issues, on a six monthly basis, commencing in October 2004.

# Appendix A

## Core curriculum of planning

### KNOWLEDGE OF:

- the purpose and methods of planning (the traditions, current philosophies, principles, practice, and the emerging issues),
- the natural and cultural environment, principles of ecologically sustainable development, methods of evaluating, improving, building and managing the environments,
- the political, legal and institutional contexts of planning including the influence of native title on land tenure,
- relevant social, economic and environmental principles, and
- indigenous Australian cultures, including relationships between their physical environment and associated social and economic systems.

### SKILLS IN:

- problem definition and objectives formulation for development and conservation,
- understanding policy formulation, evaluation and implementation,
- plan making and the use of planning instruments,
- understanding urban design principles,
- understanding urban and regional economies,
- understanding strategic dimensions and their implications,
- strategic planning related to economic climate, social change and environmental sustainability,
- development control and its relationship with its environment and with strategic plans,
- mediation and conflict resolution,
- research methods including quantitative and qualitative analysis,
- verbal written and graphic communication,
- the use of information technology,
- knowledge synthesis and application in planning practice, and
- understanding and responding to cultural diversity and difference.

### ADOPTION OF PROFESSIONAL ETHICS:

- Integrate value issues in practice, ranging from professional practice ethics of consideration of future generations, to respect for diversity and the importance of social equity.
- Assess critically the use of professional knowledge, skills and communication.

---

(Adapted from Melotte, B (1996) Planning Competencies: Report to National Council, Royal Australian Planning Institute, November Mimeo)

# Appendix B

## Submissions on the Discussion Paper

NAME	Position	Organisation/Location
<b>Annabelle Pegrum</b>	Chief Executive	National Capital Authority
Anthony Newland	Landscape Planning Manager	DIPNR, Murray-Murrumbidgee Region, NSW
Bob Karaszekewych	Member of the Planning Institute of Australia	Driver, NT
Brett Whitworth	Team Leader, Illawarra and South Coast	Department of Infrastructure, Planning and Natural Resources, NSW
Cr Dr Sara Murray and Cr Phyllis Miller	President President	Local Government Association on NSW Shires Association of NSW (joint submission)
David Dowling	Associate Dean (Academic)	Faculty of Engineering and Surveying, University of Southern Qld
David Seymour	Strategic Land Use Planner	Eurobodalla Shire Council
Denise Turner		Coburg, Victoria
Dr John Lea	School of Architecture, Design Science and Planning	University of Sydney
Dr Wendy Sarkissian	Principal	Sarkissian Associates Planners Pty Ltd, Qld
Ian Costley	CEO, Development NSW	Mirvac
Ian Crowie	Director Strategies and Legislation	Department of Local Government and Regional Development, WA
Ian McKininmonth	Strategic Land-Use Planner	Department of Agriculture, WA
James Suprain	Transport Management Officer	Blacktown City Council, NSW
Jane Lomax-Smith	Minister for Employment, Training and Further Education	SA Government
Jenny Dixon	Department of Planning	University of Auckland
Jeremy Dawkins	Centre for Developing Cities	University of Canberra
Jim Varghese	Director-General	Department of Employment and Training, Qld
Juanita Higgs	Regional Projects Manager	Southern Sydney Regional Organisations of Councils
Katy Gallagher	Minister for Education, Youth and Family Services	ACT Legislative Assembly

NAME	Position	Organisation/Location
Adrian Gilderdale	Student Town Planner	University of New South Wales
Kelly Johnson	Town Planner	The Planning Group WA Pty Ltd
Ken Phelan	Heritage and Civic Design Manager	Cessnock City Council, NSW
Kon Vatskalis	Minister	Minister for Lands and Planning, NT
Kyle Ferguson	Chief Project Officer	Planning SA ~ Department of Transport and Urban Planning
Lois Sparkes	Branch Manager	Quality, Equity and Collaboration Branch, Department of Education, Science and Training
Luke Nicholls	Assistant Director	Western Sydney Regional Organisations of Councils
Marcus Brooks	Urban Planner	Dickson Rothschild, NSW
Michael Lockwood	Coordinator, Environmental Planning	School of Geography and Environmental Studies, University of Tasmania
Monique Roser	Chair	NSW Consulting Planners
Nita Cunningham MP	Minister	Minister for Local Government and Planning (Qld)
Noel Barnsley	A/G Assistant Secretary Migration Branch	Department of Immigration and Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs
Patricia Gilchrist	Executive Director	Urban Development Institute of Australia, NSW
Pauline Hogan		Sydney, NSW
Peta Lane	Higher Education Adviser	Office of the Minister for Education, Science and Training (Federal)
Peter McEwan	Acting General Manager	Planning, Land Services and Environmental Regulation, Department of Sustainability and Environment, Victoria
Professor John Hockings and Associate Professor Phil Heywood	Head of School and Discipline Leader, Urban and Regional Planning	School of Design and Built Environment, Qld University of Technology
Scott Phillips	Senior Planner	Menai, NSW
Troy Loveday	Spokesperson	NSW Young Planners
Wayne Gersbach	Executive Director Planning and Environment	Housing Industry Association

# Submissions received on the Consultation Draft

NAME	Position	Organisation/Location
John Bartels and Kate Wagner	Qld Young Planner Representative and National Young Planner Convenor	Qld and National Young Planners Group of Planning Institute of Australia
Dr Arnis Siksna	National Honorary Education Convenor	Planning Institute of Australia
Professor Robert Freestone	Head Planning and Urban Development	Faculty of Built Environment, University of New South Wales
David Hecksher	Director of Planning	Toowoomba City Council
Paul Magarey	Chair	Australian Bicycle Council

# Appendix C

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## Want to know more?

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