Planning Institute of Australia New South Wales Division

2009-2010 Annual Report

President’s Report
Welcome and thank you

It is with pleasure that I present the report of activities of the NSW Division for the financial year 2009-2010.

It has been another exciting year for PIA in NSW with a new Divisional Committee taking up their positions in January 2010. New members continued to join the Institute at a pleasing rate, and our financial position has further strengthened, as set out in the Treasurer’s report.

First and foremost, I would like to acknowledge the support and hard work of the Division Committee and thank them for their efforts on behalf of PIA NSW.

A new Division Committee, under a new President, took office in January 2010. The Committee has been expanded and a number of portfolios created, to allow a focus on key areas of Policy, Education, Events and Social, and Rural and Regional. A full day working session was held in late January to induct the new Committee and develop strategic directions for the year.

It has been pleasing to see a number of new faces on our Committees this year and to welcome back some Members who have previously held positions within the Division.

A special thank you goes to Vice Presidents Greg Woodhams and Sarah Hill, to our Past President Julie Bindon for her ongoing contribution, National Councillor Paul Mitchell, Honorary Treasurer Brian Elton.

My thanks to the Chairs of all our Chapters, Special Interest Groups and Branches and their alternates who have represented so well the interests of their respective groups. Your contributions to policy development, the preparation of draft submissions and organising events relevant to your areas of interest and expertise has made a huge difference to the quality and depth of our work.

Economic Development Chapter – Micheline Lane
Environment Chapter – Javier Valderrama
Planning Law Group – David Ryan
Transport Chapter – Colin Henson
Urban and Regional Planning Chapter – Greg Woodhams & David Seymour
Urban Design Chapter – Philip Graus and Diana Griffiths

Consulting Planners Group – Sarah Hill & Clare Swan
Local Government Planners Network - Joanna Dunkerley and David Christy
Young Planners - Sebastian Tauni

Northern NSW Branch – Chris Pratt and Branch Secretary Greg Yeates
South Coast Illawarra Branch - David Winterbottom and David Seymour
Hunter Branch – Scott Anson and Rob Dwyer
Central West Branch – Ashley Albury

And particular mention to:
Ian Sinclair our Social and Events Chair
Committee Members Tong Wu, Aoife Wynter, David Wilson, Steve O’Connor, Max Fragar and Eugene Sarich.
Stephen McMahon, Editor of New Planner magazine
Tim Wilson - National Young Planners Representative.

The NSW Division has participated at the National level, with representation on the National Policy and Education Committees. National Councillor Tony McNamara (to January 2010) and Paul Mitchell participated in meetings of National Council and the Executive Committee of National Council.

Our Divisional Office Staff have done a sterling job in delivering some great events, preparing submissions, correspondence and membership advice. A special thanks to our NSW Division Manager Robyn Vincin who has done so much over the last 3 plus years in getting the Division on a firm organisational and financial footing.

I would also like to thank every member who has supported the Institute here in NSW throughout the year, especially those many people who have dedicated their time in working on committees, preparing submissions and contributing in workshops– thank you.

Finally on behalf of PIA our thanks to our sponsors throughout the year for their continued generosity without which we could not continue to deliver the number or level of services that we do.

Membership snapshot

As at June 2010, NSW Division membership stood at 1253 members. We continue to have the highest membership of any Division. It has been pleasing to welcome many new members, including a strong representation of young planners.

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NSW Division Structure

As at 30 June 2010, all seven PIA Chapters and three Special Interest Groups were active in New South Wales. There are PIA Branches operating in Northern NSW, the Hunter, Illawarra South Coast and the Central West. These Branches provide valuable networks for non metropolitan planners, as well as feedback and engagement mechanisms for the Division as a whole.

The Division maintains a small office in North Sydney. Events and larger meetings are held at external venues. We acknowledge the support of a number of our sponsors and members in making meeting space available.

At 30 June 2010 the NSW Division had two full time equivalent staff, including the State Manager (full time), a part time policy officer and part time administrative officer.

Key events

Activities throughout the year included:

- 2009 State Conference was held in Newcastle from 14-16 October, continuing our commitment to rural/ regional areas. The 2009 Awards for Planning Excellence were held in conjunction with the Conference dinner. Over 230 people attended our Conference and Awards dinner and over 180 delegates attended the conference. Thanks go to Newcastle City Council who hosted the Welcome Reception and to the PIA Hunter Branch who contributed valuable local knowledge to conference organisation.

- The professional development seminar program was run in conjunction with the NSW Chapters throughout the year, and PIA Branch meetings were held in the Illawarra, at Dapto, Bermagui and Kiama, and Northern Branch at Tweed, Kempsey and Coffs Harbour. The Central West Branch held a meeting at Dubbo in March 2010.

- The biannual Sidney Luker Award was held in December 2009 and we once again thank our Committee of Past NSW Presidents for their deliberations. The 2009 recipient was Professor Rob Adams from Melbourne City Council. The Luker lecture was presented by Dr Garry Glazebrook.

- Young Planners Group activities included a Trivia Night in August 2009, a Young Planners’ Forum in April 2010, and a number of networking events.

- The second Planners Dinner in June 2010 attracted over 200 planners and looks set to become a significant evening on our events calendar.

- 2010 saw the introduction of Rural Development Assessment Workshops. This joint activity by PIA and Edge Planning ran over two 5 day modules in four regional
centres. Feedback has been very positive and it is intended to run a series of rural strategic planning workshops in 2011.

**Policy and Advocacy**
Regular meetings have been held with key stakeholders including NSW Department of Planning, NSW Minister for Planning, NSW Shadow Minister for Planning, other industry bodies, including the PCA, UDIA, National Trust and Institute of Architects (NSW).

The NSW Division media presence has increased, with a number of radio interviews, reports in the daily media and requests for backgrounding on planning issues.

The Division prepared a *Key Policy Platforms* document in October 2009. These three key policies guide our work priorities and our submissions. The Division made 15 major submissions on NSW planning matters during the year, and contributed to a number of preliminary discussions on new planning instruments.

The Division has continued to provide input to National policies and position statements, utilising the expertise in our Chapters and our networks.

NSW members represent the Institute on a number of external committees, advisory groups and working groups, including the Natural Resources Advisory Committee (NRAC), UWS Urban Research Centre External Advisory Committee and other university boards, Department of Planning working groups on planning reform, NSW Metropolitan Greenspace Program, Sharing Sydney Harbour Access Program, NSW Land & Environment Court Users Group.

There has been a marked increase in stakeholder engagement particularly with the NSW Department of Planning, resulting in PIA NSW representation on a number of working groups – review of NSW Planning Regulations, Centres Policy, Affordable Housing, Complying Development Codes Panel, Local Exclusions and Variations Panel.

This amount of work would not have been possible without the contribution of our Members, in the preparation of submissions, in attending workshops and meetings. Thank you to everyone who has contributed their time and their expertise.

**Education**
Key activities have been the promotion of CPP and the Planning Practice Courses; the NSW Education Committee has provided input to National and State education policy; and a number of University accreditation boards met during the year.

**Communication with members**
Communication with our Members continues to be a priority. Quarterly issues of New Planner magazine have been produced and sent to all NSW members plus a number of subscribers.
Thank you to Stephen McMahon for his excellent work and ongoing commitment as Editor of the magazine.

The monthly eNews and website have kept members and non-members informed.

RECOMMENDATION

1. That this report be received and noted.