Planning Institute Australia
PROVINCIAL VICTORIA LOCAL GOVERNMENT INTERNSHIP PROGRAM AND PLANNING ASSISTANT TRAINING PROGRAM

First Installment Status Report
Index

Executive Summary ..........................................................................................2
Introduction .......................................................................................................2
Objectives .........................................................................................................3
Funding and Scope ...........................................................................................4
Project Outline/ Structure ..................................................................................5
Participation .......................................................................................................7
Internship Report (8) .........................................................................................8
Council Report .................................................................................................11
Traineeship Report (9) .....................................................................................11
Evaluation - Progress report ............................................................................15
Recommendations .............................................................................................16
Executive Summary

Provincial Victorian local governments are experiencing a planning skills shortage. The Planning Institute of Australia and local government planning departments are acutely aware of the challenges and risks this shortage poses for regional Victoria at a time of immense growth and development in regional Victoria.

The PIA and state government initiatives of the Provincial Victoria Local Government Internship Program (for planning students in PIA approved planning courses) and the Planning Assistant Training Program (for council employees wishing to undertake a para-planning role) are mechanisms that address the skills shortage.

PIA has successfully delivered the first round of each program and found the following key results which met and go beyond the initial project objectives.

- 75% of participants in the Planning Assistant Training Program indicated that the experience has encouraged them to undertake further training planning
- 67% of Interns felt that a permanent job offer could arise out of the Internship experience. It has been confirmed with councils that four of the ten students have already obtained full time and part time employment arising out of the internship.
- 88% of Interns felt that they were better prepared to enter a professional planning role after the internship experience
- 88% of participants in the Internship program believed it improved their likelihood of working in a regional planning role.
- A large number of trainees had already participated in the Certificate IV program currently offered by Swinburne University, indicating that this short-term vocational training addressed a different strategic need for planning staff.
- 75% of trainees felt more confident to undertake further responsibilities / different roles in their own planning departments having undertaken the traineeship.
- All of the provincial councils involved in the internship program are happy to host students again.

PIA is highly supportive of the objectives of the two programs and will continue to facilitate these with the support of government. The initial phase has succeeded in giving students a meaningful and valuable experience of living in regional Victoria and undertaking a local government planning role.

The feedback from councils that supported the program was similarly positive, exemplified in the number of students that councils continued to employ.

The traineeship program has succeeded in delivering to planning staff the tools to become effective planning assistants and also a valuable education experience that has encouraged many to undertake further training in planning.

The key recommendation of this report is to double the number of places available in each of the internship and the traineeship program for the remaining installments of the program.
Introduction

The Planning Assistant Training Program (‘Traineeship’) and the Provincial Victoria Local Government Internship (‘Internship’) program are two strategies under the Managing Growth in Regional Communities Government Initiative that sets out to address a regional planning skills shortage.

The Planning Institute of Australia (PIA) Victoria Division has administered these projects in conjunction with LaTrobe University Bendigo and with the support of the State Government.

The government grant refers to both programs as one “Project”. In the interest of clarity this report will differentiate these two programs that serve the similar objectives. These objectives are served through:

- Developing the skills of people already working in local government, and
- By encouraging student planners to undertake trial employment with a local government and experience living in regional Victoria.

This status report outlines the progress of each program following the first grant installment. The Project Agreement is scheduled to conclude March 31 2010 which allows for four rounds of applications.
Objectives

The Provincial Victoria Local Government Internship program is designed to:

- Assist local governments in provincial Victoria to find, recruit and retain more planners;
- Allow young planners to experience the positive aspects of working in local government in regional Victoria;
- Build greater awareness of the career opportunities in planning in local government in provincial Victoria;
- Provide students with short term work opportunities in provincial local governments with reasonable financial rewards; and
- Give students an opportunity to develop their planning skills and knowledge of regional planning issues.

The Planning Assistant Training Program is designed to:

- Encourage local government employees in provincial Victoria to undertake training to enhance their skills and capacity to perform the role of planning assistants or ultimately undertake a Certificate IV, Degree, Graduate Diploma or Masters course in Planning;
- Increase the planning resources and capacities of local governments in provincial Victoria;
- Build greater awareness of the career opportunities in planning in local government in provincial Victoria.
**Funding and Scope**

PIA is assisted in delivering this project through a government grant of $40,000 for each installment, with a total of four installments over three years. Each installment provides for five opportunities in both the Traineeship program and the Internship program.

The level of interest in each program was such that the Planning Institute negotiated with Regional Development Victoria (RDV) to use the second installment in advance to place more participants in the Traineeship and Internship programs. The decision was made to place ten participants in the training program as it made better use of the training environment; made for a good class size and group learning environment; rewarded a more equitable percentage of applicants, while capitalizing on the administrative work associated with selecting participants and promoting the program.

Also, the level of interest in the Internship Program exceeded the already high level of interest in the Traineeship program. The PIA placed ten students in the Internship program to make use of the strong support by local governments to host a student Interns, to reward a more equitable percentage of applicants and again to capitalize on the administrative work associated with selecting participants and promoting the program.

In respect to the Traineeship, funding of $2200 (GST Inc) per participant paid for training costs, and $1800 (GST Inc) to contribute to ongoing training requirements within their place of employment. Preferred candidates were those that had not previously had training in planning.

In respect to the Internship Program, placement councils were paid $3000 to contribute to student salaries (minimum salary was to be $800 per week).
**Project Outline/ Structure**

**Promotion**
Both programs were promoted through:

- Personalized letters to all regional Victorian local government planning managers, CEOs and Mayors;
- Flyers distributed by university planning departments to all students;
- PIA Victoria monthly publication Planning News and Weekly eBulletin;
- PIA presentations, stakeholder discussions and promotion by university lecturers;
- Promotional material within the PIA office;
- Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV) eBulletin advertisement;
- Promotion by the Victorian Young Planners network on myspace;
- Promoted to departmental regional managers by inter-government communication channels.
- University electronic mail outs.

**Councils**
PIA contacted regional council planning managers, CEOs and Mayors via mail with information about the advantages of both programs to council planning departments.

With respect to the Internship expressions of interest were then sought and personal discussions conducted to ascertain whether the work environment was suitable for hosting students. With both programs, councils and council staff were selected on the basis of need and the match to the student applicant where possible.

**Internships**
PIA took applications from students in accredited courses which included undergraduate and postgraduate courses in planning at Melbourne University, LaTrobe University and RMIT University. Ten students were chosen on the basis of marks, extra-curricular
activities and interests, the quality of their application and a demonstration of an understanding of working provincial Victoria.

PIA notified councils and students that they gained a place in the program. PIA then confirmed that councils had appointed a placement supervisor and that students could in some cases travel the significant distance to the nominated council.

PIA wrote to students and councils, offering contact details and encouraging students to make contact and arrange mutually convenient dates for meeting the planning departments and commencing work.

The Internship was for six weeks. Feedback from the evaluation surveys suggests that the some of the Internships continued longer than six week, with most receiving offers of full time or part time employment during or following the students completion of their studies.

**Traineeship**

PIA Victoria Division administered both projects in partnership with LaTrobe University Bendigo. LaTrobe was selected as the ideal provider for the Planning Assistant Training Program due to its regional location, its expertise in delivering practical, vocational short courses.

The training program was structured in two three day training sessions. The training sessions included a range of theoretical and vocational exercises, including field excursions which allowed participants to better understand planning assessments. The course covered:

- Introduction to the Victorian Planning Scheme and the role of a planning assistant
- Planning / assessing permit applications
- Planning schemes / amendments and
- Enforcement of the Planning and Environment Act

The professional development course gave participants the tools to become effective planning assistants. The course content is also recognized as part of a diploma in Planning, giving participants the option to continue in a diploma in planning.
**Participation**

**Internship (26 applications)**

PIA received 26 detailed applications from planning students wishing to take part in the Provincial Victoria Local Government Internship Program. In some cases students had a preexisting knowledge of or came from rural areas.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Selected Participant</th>
<th>University</th>
<th>Internship</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Luke Bott</td>
<td>LaTrobe University</td>
<td>City of Greater Bendigo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fiona Brookes</td>
<td>The University of Melbourne</td>
<td>Glenelg Shire Council</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lachlan Forsyth</td>
<td>RMIT</td>
<td>Southern Grampians Shire Council</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dana Mizrachi</td>
<td>The University of Melbourne</td>
<td>Mt Alexander Shire Council</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Haruna Noda</td>
<td>The University of Melbourne</td>
<td>Indigo Shire Council</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nicholas Pascarl</td>
<td>The University of Melbourne</td>
<td>Central Goldfields Shire Council</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bronwyn Pettitt</td>
<td>RMIT</td>
<td>Ballarat City Council</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miriam Potts</td>
<td>RMIT</td>
<td>Ararat Rural City Council</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elizabeth Spurr</td>
<td>The University of Melbourne</td>
<td>Bass Coat Shire Council</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ryan Thomas</td>
<td>RMIT</td>
<td>Moorabool Shire Council</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Traineeship (22 applications)**

The following local government employees were selected to participate in the program. An application was also received from a regional statutory authority with planning responsibilities. This was outside the project funding constraints and was declined. Though the authority then chose to fully fund their applicant to participate in the program.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Selected Participant</th>
<th>Council of Employment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sue Barnewall</td>
<td>Rural City of Wangaratta</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kellie Burmeister</td>
<td>Gannawarra City Council</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Terrie Calvert</td>
<td>East Gippsland Shire Council</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fiona Hakkennes</td>
<td>Wodonga City Council</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Andrea Hoffman</td>
<td>Ballarat City Council</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fiona Hunter-Evans</td>
<td>Borough of Queenscliff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Catherine Maika</td>
<td>Ballarat City Council</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leigh Page</td>
<td>Southern Grampians Shire Council</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Judy Powell</td>
<td>Wellington Shire Council</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Internship Report (8)

Evaluation of the outcomes of the project including feedback from councils, students and the PIA as to the effectiveness of the initiatives and issues and opportunities arising

### Internship Program - Student ranking

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Perception</th>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Neither agree nor disagree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Felt better prepared to enter professional planning employment</td>
<td>0.0% (0)</td>
<td>0.0% (0)</td>
<td>0.0% (0)</td>
<td>22.2% (2)</td>
<td>77.8% (7)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Felt a permanent job offer could arise out of the experience</td>
<td>0.0% (0)</td>
<td>0.0% (0)</td>
<td>11.1% (1)</td>
<td>33.3% (3)</td>
<td>55.6% (5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Received an offer of ongoing employment</td>
<td>0.0% (0)</td>
<td>0.0% (0)</td>
<td>12.5% (1)</td>
<td>25.0% (2)</td>
<td>62.5% (5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gained a positive insight into working in a regional planning role</td>
<td>0.0% (0)</td>
<td>0.0% (0)</td>
<td>12.5% (1)</td>
<td>12.5% (1)</td>
<td>75.0% (6)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Comments

**The most positive aspects of the Internship**

1. The variety of work I was given. The contacts I made at the City of Ballarat and the good friendly environment.
2. I gained a variety of experience through this internship. This includes a good insight into working as a planner as well as a rare experience of living in rural areas. I am certain that this positive experience could not be found without positive and welcoming attitudes of Shire's staff.

3. Many to mention. Most of all I enjoyed learning how planning operates in a rural community. I think that the structure of two days in statutory and three days in strategic provided a good initiation to the field of planning.

4. - the variety of applications I processed
   - the opportunity to attend VCAT, Mediation, and Panel hearings
   - being part of the team in all aspects of the Council and the Planning Team

5. Meeting different people from different fields of profession, i.e. Engineers, Architects, Environmental Planners. Planners motivated me to complete my degree and work through the difficult times ahead.

6. Gaining hands on experience and applying lessons I have learnt at university. Also speaking with my supervisor and other planners about planning issues and the profession as a whole.

7. I was given responsibility for a pile of planning reports straight up and treated as an actual planner by the staff for the most part. It was valuable experience as a statutory planner, but a small amount experience on the strategic side would have been just as valuable I think.

8. The staff were most welcoming and positive: I felt part of the team straight away, and it was really nice to be given my own project to complete during the internship.

How could your internship have been of greater value to you?

1. I was fortunate to be placed within a department at Council that made my internship a very positive experience.

2. Everything had been positive. This includes meeting with planners who does their job respectfully. If I was offered to stay as a planner, I would have taken it. Unfortunately, their budget does not allow to employ another planner. However, my supervisor helped me finding a job in the area and I was offered a job by a consultant in the area.

3. Longer in length, the first few weeks is a lot of learning but after this it would have been nice to be provided with more time to use my learning in constructing something meaningful.

4. It would have been beneficial to also experience working in strategic planning, not just statutory planning.

5. More time to sit down with Planners and ask generalized questions about the profession.

6. Although I did receive a lot of guidance and have been taught a lot of things about the planning process, more guidance and supervised learning is always a good thing and something I would have benefited from.

7. If I'd been provided with a little more direction at the beginning instead of just being expected to be able to assess the merits of a planning permit and write the report straight away it would have been easier. I was given an old report and told to copy it the format and structure but no direction on how to assess a permit application. If I'd been able to sit in on meetings as appropriate on more complex permit applications or accompany the other planners on site visits to gain a greater idea of how they do it instead of being left on my own to work it out. And once I'd run out of reports or things to do it took them a couple of days to dig up more things for me to do, so that was really frustrating sitting waiting for more work.

8. If it was possible to work in a location closer to home.
Impressions of working in a rural area – improved likelihood of working in a regional area

1. The City of Ballarat was a large regional Council and was good in that it not only had a city to manage but also has rural areas to plan for. Therefore the variety in work and the projects that the strategic team had going on varied greatly. I would happily work in a regional council.

2. Yes, I had a chance to experience a variety of statutory planning works from heritage issues, farming issues to subdivision and certificate of compliance. I understand that this is one of the advantage of a regional area and by starting with such a variety of issues, young planner like myself would advantage.

3. This program has promoted the region and at the completion of the internship I will be working part time with the Council while I complete my studies.

4. The lifestyle and work is more appealing than I expected, and I would be likely to take a position in a regional area in the future.

5. The customers/applicants in a regional area are more understanding of the aims and roles of Planners. People will take the time to sit down and go through the application if it is not compliant with State or Local provisions.

6. I enjoyed working in a regional area. I enjoy the lifestyle and the ability to watch and understand how planning decisions affect the community. At this stage I couldn’t say if the experience has improved my likely hood to live in a regional area, however I now have a far better understanding of this area of the profession.

7. It has improved the likelihood of taking a position in regional Victoria, but not so far from Melbourne I don’t think. I think you get a greater variety of applications within regional Victoria, though I haven't work in the city to be able to compare. Overall the experience was rewarding, and I have another two weeks left to complete in September due to the timing of my semester of study in London I wasn’t able to complete the 6 weeks in one shot.

8. It was an excellent experience and I would love to work in a planning position in a regional area.

Other comments

1. Overall it was a very positive experience.

2. Through the internship, I felt the support from PIA stuff. I am certain that this internship is a great value for all the parties including young planners, regional council and PIA Victoria. I thank PIA for this great opportunity and support and I hope that more young planners will advantage from this internship.

3. Moorabool Council would be a great place for any future interns to be located.

4. It has been a great experience and I hope that the PIA continues to offer the internships for the benefit of future students.

5. I am very grateful for the opportunity and thank everyone who is involved in the program. This has been an invaluable experience and I hope it continues to be run in the upcoming years. Further thanks go to Stephanie Mack for all her effort in making the program work so successfully.
6. Not particularly, only that I am thankful and appreciative that the PIA allowed me the opportunity to learn and improve my understanding of the rural/regional local government side of planning.

7. I feel that Glenelg may have applied for an intern to reduce the backlog of planning applications they are currently faced with. One disadvantage I felt was that the Manager, Syd had only begun a couple of weeks before me and as such as running blind as much as I was for most of the time in terms of knowing the region. I felt that the other two statutory planners always seemed too busy to help or explain/discuss either a particular application or planning process, and as such didn’t feel comfortable approaching them with questions or queries.

8. Thank you for providing me with a very valuable experience.

Council Report
PIA has received informal responses from councils involved in the Internship program. PIA has not received adequate survey results from councils to compile percentage data.

Feedback suggests that all councils with team members in the Traineeship or that hosted a student Intern have agreed to support further installments of both programs.
**Traineeship Report (9)**

**Traineeship Program - Participant ranking**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Participants considering pursuing further studies</th>
<th>Participants that felt the program developed their skills and knowledge in planning</th>
<th>Provided a good environment to share common interests and inquiry</th>
<th>Participants that feel more confident to undertake more responsibility in their planning department</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40%</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60%</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>80%</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>80%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>120%</td>
<td>120%</td>
<td>120%</td>
<td>120%</td>
<td>120%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Comments**

**The most positive aspects of the training program**

1. Learning from real examples from the lecturers Meeting others in working in planning from across Victoria and learning about their cases and procedures.
2. The content was fantastic. I was able to apply a lot when I returned to work. Trevor relays his knowledge very well and is able to cater for all levels of experience. It was also great to be able to share experiences with the other students.

3. The ability of the lecturers to impart knowledge to the students. The effort that lecturers went to ensure that the participants understood what they were endeavoring to impart. The camaraderie amongst the participants.

4. Learning how other Council's deal with different issues.

5. Filling in the blanks of why planners go about doing some things and not others How to use the state and local policies effectively

6. The information provided consolidated previous on-the-job learning I had done without realizing it. It presented a logical rational to the planning system.

7. The knowledge and experience of the lecturers (particularly Trevor) was fantastic. The ability to have the time (which I do not have at work) to actually look through the Planning & Environment Act was valuable. The useful contacts developed with planning staff at other councils.

How could the traineeship have been of greater value?

1. The traineeship would have been of even more use to me if I had attended when I started in planning. If management at my office had been aware of the availability and benefits of being able to complete this one unit at Latrobe instead of other courses (eg Swinburne), I may have saved myself many trips to Melbourne (ie lost work hours) throughout last year.

2. For a statutory subject, this was fantastic but would be even better if other subjects had this option (strategic, heritage etc).

3. Longer periods of time maybe over three sessions, so you are able to go into greater depth with some subjects and are not trying to cram everything about stat planning into 6 days. Widen the length of the time between sessions, after learning new skills and observing new aspects of planning this would enable you to use the skills and view other problems or issues that you need explained to you in these sessions.

4. Maybe look at more when a planning permit is required and do some practical examples.

5. The program was intensive. Perhaps spread over additional days with a little more time for discussion would be advantageous to those who have not been in a tertiary environment.

6. I think the traineeship was of great value to both me and the council.

What other training have you received – why did you decide to apply for this program?

1. I have attended several PLANET (DSE) courses which have been extremely useful. The Certificate IV in Local Government Planning course that I enrolled in last year is almost complete. I enrolled in the Latrobe course because I felt that it would offer me the information and knowledge that was lacking to some degree in the Swinburne course. This has definitely been the case!

2. I have been to a couple of PLANET courses but they didn't have as much interaction as this course did. I applied for the course in the hope that I would learn more about Statutory Planning. I actually learnt that I knew a lot of the course content (which I was happy about) but it was really helpful to be able to organize it into a logical relevant manner.
3. Certificate IV in local government planning Have applied for the Graduate Diploma course in Rural & regional planning

4. Certificate IV in planning at Swinburne and it was a waste of time as it really had nothing to do with planning.

5. None. I applied for the program with a view to furthering my education and in anticipation of applying to enroll in the Cert/Diploma course.

6. I have received no other training - so far. I applied for the training program to build my knowledge base so I could expand my roles within my position, and that is exactly what I have been able to do.

7. a 2 day PLANET seminar at DSE in Melbourne - Intro to Planning a couple of information sessions held by Maddocks Lawyers in Melbourne (amending permits & Section 173 agreements) Information sessions held at Council by local CFA, NECMA and other organizations

Would you be interested in participating in other planning courses following this one?

1. I would be interested in considering other training courses at the completion of the and the Swinburne course. However, I am looking at having a break from study, as my current workload is substantial due to the shortage of planning staff in my office.

2. Yes! In any courses that would help me as a para-planner in the Statutory Planning field.

3. Other than the Grad Dip course Any other courses that would help me in my planning area

4. Not at this point in time

5. I would be interested in participating in other planning courses. I'm not sure what type of course. As I have only been in planning for 8 months I am still trying ascertain my ambitions.

6. Still deciding - depending on the outcome of my assessment with this program. More likely to enroll in short courses and not a degree.

Other comments

1. It has been extremely beneficial to me that the course was offered on scholarship from the Planning Institute. I greatly appreciate having being given this opportunity, and would like to be notified of other similar courses that the Planning Institute recommends. I know of several staff at metropolitan councils (through my course at Swinburne) that were disappointed that they could not apply for this scholarship, as they have/had the same needs with regard to training as I do. I know that they would also appreciate the support and information offered. This may be more of a management issue (at their own workplace) however, as many of those staff were also not aware that PLANET courses were available in the metropolitan area until I advised them. My thanks to the staff at the Planning Institute for the information and assistance, particularly Stephanie Mack!

2. Trevor Budge is a fantastic facilitator - he was easy to listen to, he had examples of situations that applied to every part of the planning scheme (that we talked about) and was extremely helpful. I can see why he is so well regarded in this field

3. Had a great time meeting people, learning about the planning (from great teachers), great food and enjoyed exploring a new city - Bendigo.
*Evaluation - Progress report*

**Internship**
The surveys suggest that the Internship experience was positive for all participants. In short answer component of the survey all students agreed that the experience was challenging and stimulating, that they are better prepared to enter the field of planning, with over half of students agreeing that a permanent job offer could arise out of this experience.

Written responses suggest that councils could have been better prepared in some instances so that they could offer direction and support. Thought must be given to whether a council has the resources to support a student intern. However most students were happy with variety of work they were exposed to and the attitude of their council team.

Most students agreed that the Internship experience has improved their likelihood of working in a regional area, or at least helped them to understand regional planning issues. Students found the variety of work, pleasant atmosphere and welcoming team environment appealing.

The level of interest in the Internship program suggests that:
- Students are willing to travel long distances to gain the work experience
- Students believe six weeks with local government is a good way to ‘get their foot in the door’ while gaining some relevant experience
- It is invaluable to students to gain work experience in planning before entering the workforce.

PIA has observed that the level of work some students were exposed to unsupervised suggests that regional planning departments are understaffed and for this reason they may find it difficult to recruit and retain planners.

**Councils**

Feedback from councils through the survey format has been minimal. Discussion with the PIA have suggested that the Internship has been a positive experience for councils. Student questionnaire results indicate that students were exposed to a variety of work, at times unsupervised. These responses again reflect the heavy workload on regional local government planning departments.

**Traineeship**

The surveys suggest that the Traineeship program was a valuable experience for all participants. The positive aspects of the training were that it consolidated working knowledge and allowed participants to learn from other people undertaking para-planning roles (having a larger number of participants allowed for interesting discussion). Participants agreed that the content and style of training was accessible and the training environment fostered learning.
Of participants that had previous training, most commented that they applied for the program to gain training that was more relevant, and more accessible to them. They found that they are now more confident to perform a para-planning role.

The PIA observes that there is an advantage to this intensive shorter model of training over other models of training. Participants and applicants that have undertaken certificate IV in planning (5) commented that the course lacks practical utility and it inaccessible for regional planning staff (short sessions, monthly, at a long distance).
Recommendations

- **Increase Funding**
  - To double the number of positions available per installment per program
  - Conduct an induction program for councils and students in the internship to maximize the benefits
  - Stage a conclusion event, creating an opportunity for the Minister to congratulate participants in either program
  - Allow for promotional costs

- **Program parameters**
  - Allow for the changing circumstances in planning education (i.e., Under the Melbourne University Melbourne Model) by allowing undergraduate students in non-planning related degrees to participate in the program.
  - Completing the feedback survey will be a contractual requirement of all future participants

- **Program Structure**
  - Councils to submit a work plan with their application to host interns
  - PIA to develop more structured guidelines for councils hosting interns