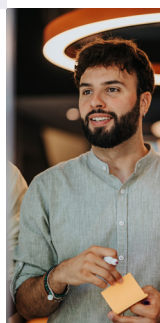
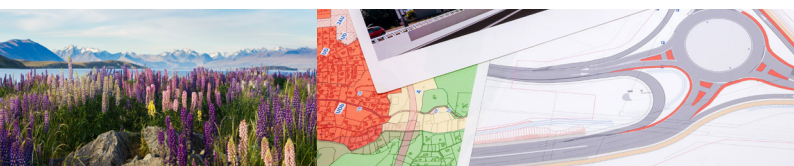


ROLE OF THE PLANNER

SURVEY REPORT 2023

*Lead and advance planning
to create a better Aotearoa*



Prepared by Brae Ihaka on behalf of:

TE KŌKIRINGA TAUMATA
NEW ZEALAND PLANNING INSTITUTE



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The results of the Role of the Planner survey, undertaken in September 2023, suggest that the role of the planner is to improve outcomes for the community and the environment, through policy and strategy development, and assessment and approval. Planners do this by thinking holistically and critically, using their communication and collaboration strengths, and applying their planning knowledge and experience.

The process of planning is equally as important as the outcomes planning achieves. Planners get satisfaction from delivering positive outcomes and get frustrated by process issues.

Planners consider the 'planner way of thinking' to be a holistic approach that balances and weighs multiple perspectives and technical inputs. Moral principles underpin the work of planners, including integrity, equity, fairness, honesty, and trust. Planners have the public interest in mind.

Māori views and values make planning in Aotearoa New Zealand unique.

The different tertiary qualifications that planners hold make planners feel well prepared for their roles, but those planners with planning degrees are more likely to feel well prepared than those with other qualifications.

Legislation has a strong influence on the role of planners.

Planners expect changes to their roles in the future related to the system they work within and increased use of artificial intelligence and data technology.

BACKGROUND

Te Kōkiringa Taumata | New Zealand Planning Institute (NZPI) has conducted 'The Role of the Planner' survey to gain insight from our members as to how they see themselves as planners, as well as their perceptions and outlook of the planning profession. It is important for NZPI to distil the essence of the role of the planner so that we can continue to nurture, cultivate, promote, and celebrate these fundamental virtues of our people, and further secure the place of the planning profession now and into the future.

The data obtained from this survey will further be used to develop a position paper on the identity and role of the planner in Aotearoa New Zealand; highlighting the unique attributes, methods and mindsets of planners that allow them to perform in a discipline pivotal in shaping the landscapes of Aotearoa New Zealand.

We wish to thank those members who took the time to provide their valuable feedback.

METHODOLOGY

The survey comprised of 15 questions and sub-questions (Appendix 1), with a mix of multiple-choice and open-ended options. The survey was open for responses between August 31st and September 10th, 2023; and received three hundred and one (301) valid responses. Participants could abstain from answering questions, resulting in some questions recording less than 301 responses.

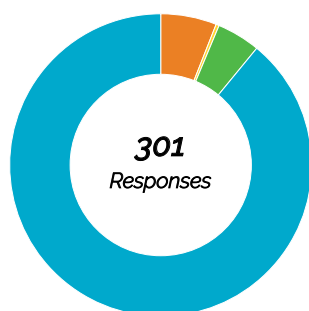
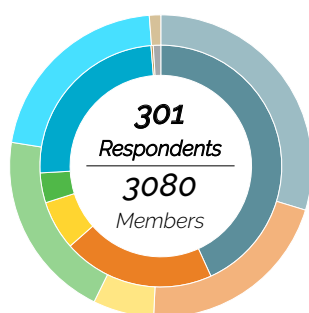


DEMOGRAPHICS

We ask demographic questions in our surveys so that we can understand how responses are affected by a respondent's particular characteristics. Under the broader question of '*What is your demographic?*', the survey asked 11 multiple-choice sub-questions. These were utilised to help understand the demographic breakdown of the respondents. These responses were later used to identify if specific themes from the open-ended questions were more prevalent in specific groups.

A summary of the responses to the demographic questions is provided in the following tables.

The first table compares the number of survey respondents to the total number of NZPI members as of 10th September, 2023. These are further defined by membership categories in order to gain an understanding of how representative the survey results are of the membership base. Respondents in the *Full/Fellow/Honorary* category are over-represented compared to the total proportion of these members (43.2% compared to 29.2%). The *Intermediate, Graduate, Associate* and *Inactive* categories are considered to be represented in relative proportion to the membership base. Students are under-represented compared to the total proportion of members (4%, compared to 19.9%), meaning the responses in the 'Student' category cannot be relied upon to be representative.



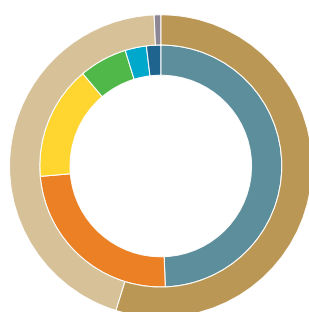
MEMBERSHIP & IDENTITY

Survey Respondents	%	NZPI Membership Category	NZPI Members	%
130	43.2%	Full, Fellow & Honorary	917	29.2%
61	20.3%	Intermediate	647	20.7%
20	6.6%	Graduate	199	6.4%
12	4%	Student	623	19.9%
74	24.6%	Associate	655	20.9%
1	0.3%	Inactive	39	1.2%
3	1%	No Membership	-	-

Identifies as a Māori Planner			Identifies as a Pasifika Planner	
Responses	%		Responses	%
19	6.3%	Yes	15	5%
282	93.7%	No	286	95%

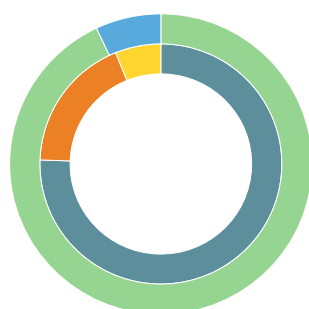
n.b. One respondent identified as both a Māori Planner and a Pasifika Planner, and is included in both counts individually.

EDUCATION



Field of Tertiary Qualification(s)	Responses	%
Planning	208	73.0%
Environmental or Resource Management	102	35.8%
Geography	64	22.5%
Environmental Science	27	9.5%
Urban Design	12	4.21%
Law	8	2.8%

Highest held Tertiary Qualification	Responses	%
Post-Graduate degree (e.g. Master's, PhD)	165	54.80%
Undergraduate Degree, Diploma, or equivalent	134	44.50%
Does not hold a Tertiary Qualification	2	0.70%



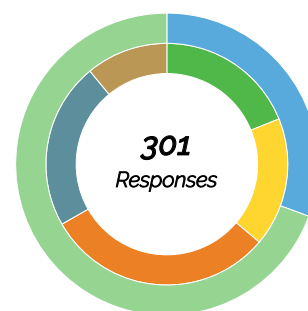
Qualification held is NZPI-Accredited	Responses	%
Yes	210	75.5%
No	51	18.35%
Don't Know	17	6.1%

Qualification gained in New Zealand	Responses	%
Yes	278	93%
No	21	7%

EXPERIENCE

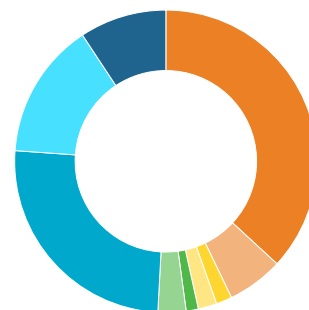
Years working in Planning Profession	Responses	%
0 - 5	57	18.9%
6 - 10	52	17.3%
11 - 20	92	30.6%
21 - 30	67	22.3%
31 +	33	11%

Overseas Planning Experience	Responses	%
Yes	92	30.6%
No	209	69.4%

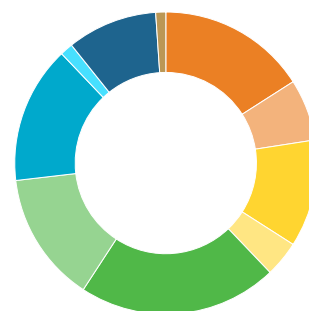


EMPLOYMENT

Employment Sector	Responses	%
Local Government (District/ City/ Regional/ Unitary Council, or Council-controlled Organisation)	111	36.9%
Central Government	18	6%
Infrastructure Provider (other than Central or Local Government)	5	1.7%
Industry or Special Interest Body	6	2%
Iwi authority, Hapū, or similar Māori Organisation	4	1.3%
University or Research Institute	9	3%
Multi-disciplinary consultancy	76	25.3%
Planning Consultancy	44	14.6%
Self-employed	28	9.3%



Primary Responsibilities over the last 12 Months	Responses	%
Preparing Regional and/or District policies and plans, including changes	104	34.60%
Central Government policy and legislation development	43	14.30%
Participating on behalf of a submitter(s) in policy, plan or consent processes (Central or Local Government)	75	24.90%
Planning teaching and/or research	25	8.30%
Managing and/or preparing resource consent applications for applicants	139	46.20%
Processing resource consent applications	91	30.20%
Providing strategic in-house planning advice	96	31.90%
Monitoring and enforcement of activities (including plan effectiveness monitoring)	9	3%
Management of Planning Staff or a Planning Business	63	20.90%
Commissioner Work	7	2.30%





ROLE OF THE PLANNER QUESTIONS

This report is primarily concerned with the responses to 13 open-ended questions focused on the role of the planner. Due to the qualitative nature of open-ended questions, and the wide variety of responses given, thematic analysis was applied to retrieve key lessons from the data.

Text analysis software (Survey Monkey) was used to identify more commonly occurring words in the datasets. This was used as an early guide to identify themes. Discretion was used on a set-by-set basis to determine how many responses made a theme relevant. Typically themes with less than 20 responses were ignored in the final analysis. Many responses were relevant to more than one theme. Where this occurred, responses were counted towards all relevant themes. Unless otherwise stated, percentages used in this report represent individual theme responses in proportion to overall theme responses.

For many of the questions, the theme responses have been sorted by demographics. The purpose of this was to understand if the demographic a respondent belongs to may impact their answer. As illustrated in the demographic data, there is substantial variation in the demographic distribution of the respondents. For example, only a small group of respondents identify as Māori Planners (6.3% of total), whereas respondents identifying as Full/Fellow/Honorary members represent a significantly larger group (43.2% of total). To account for this type of variation, differences were only considered noticeable where they were disproportionate to the number of respondents in the demographic. For demographic groups with relatively few respondents, such as Māori or Pasifika Planners, insights gained are interesting but are not considered representative.

Where responses have been sorted by NZPI membership, only the Full/ Fellow/ Honorary and Associate categories have been used. Likewise, where responses have been sorted by years of experience working as a planner, only the 0-5, 21-30 and 31+ categories have been used. This has been done to ensure distinct sub-groups are considered without drastically increasing the complexity of the data.

HOW PLANNERS DESCRIBE THEIR ROLE

This section provides an overview of the responses to the question: In one sentence, briefly describe your role as a planner, as you would explain it to a six-year-old. This question is useful to understand how planning practitioners would explain their role in a clear and simple way. Prominent themes are identified, and then categorised by NZPI Membership, years of experience, identification as a Māori or Pasifika planner, employer type, field of tertiary qualification, and whether respondents had practiced planning outside of New Zealand.

THEMES

All but 5 responses to the question: 'In one sentence, briefly describe your role as a planner, as you would explain it to a six-year-old' could be sorted into three themes: **Process focused**, **Outcome focused**, or **both**.

Process-based responses are typically based on actions, an example is:

"I help people build things".

Outcome-based responses are typically based on descriptions of outcomes, an example is:

"Making the world a better place".

A example of a response describing **both an action and an outcome** is:

"A Planner is someone who helps decide where buildings, parks, and roads should go to make our city a nice place for everyone to live and play"

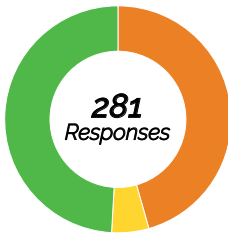


Table 1: Role of a Planner themes

Descriptor	Responses	%
Process	128	45.6%
Outcome	25	5.3%
Both	138	49.1%

The data in Table 1 shows a reasonably even split between respondents who describe their role as process focussed (45.6%) and respondents who describe their role as both process and outcomes focussed (49.1%).

This is interesting as a focus on process has been noted as an issue by NZPI in the past but has yet to be the topic of research. These results provide insights into how the shift to an outcomes-focused resource management system may impact the role of planners, as the shift may be more challenging for planners focused on process.

NZPI MEMBERSHIP

The themes identified have been categorised based on NZPI membership. The purpose of this is to understand if and how perceptions of the role change with membership status. No noticeable differences between categories were found.

YEARS OF EXPERIENCE

The themes identified have been categorised based on years of membership. The purpose of this is to understand if and how perceptions of the role change with experience. No noticeable differences between categories were found.

MĀORI AND PASIFIKA

The themes identified have been categorised based on identification as Māori and/or Pasifika. The purpose of this is to understand how Māori and/or Pasifika respondents perceive their roles. Practitioners who identified as Māori were more likely to describe their role as solely outcomes-based than the cohort average (11.8% compared to 5.3%). The significance of this statistic is limited by the low number of responses from Māori practitioners (17) and the low count of the theme "outcomes" in the dataset (25).

FIELD OF QUALIFICATION

The themes identified have been categorised based on field of tertiary qualification. The purpose of this is to understand if and how perceptions of the role change depending on the type of education respondents have undertaken. There was no noticeable difference in responses between planning and non-planning degrees.

PLANNING PRACTICE OUTSIDE NZ

The themes identified have been categorised based on if respondents had practiced overseas. The purpose of this is to understand if and how perceptions of the role change with experience outside of New Zealand. There was no noticeable difference in responses between individuals who had or had not practiced planning outside of New Zealand.

EMPLOYER

The themes identified have been categorised based on employment type (see Figure 1). The purpose of this is to understand if and how perceptions of the role might differ between organisations/work type. There is noticeable variation in responses when they have been categorised based on the type of employer.

Process-based responses were most likely to come from individuals working for infrastructure providers (other than central or local government) and those who are self-employed. Outcome-based responses were most prevalent in Iwi authority, Hapū, or similar Māori organisations. Process-and-outcome based responses were most prevalent in individuals working for university or research institutes.

The significance of these differences is limited by the relatively small number of responses for some of the employer typologies.

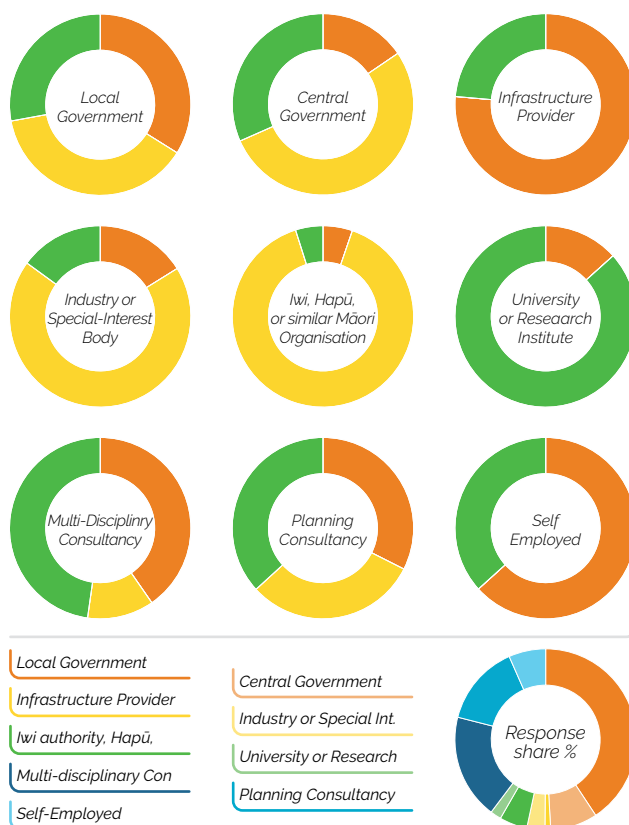


Figure 1: Role of a Planner themes by Employer

PRINCIPLES

This section provides an overview of the responses to the question: Please list up to three key principles that underlie your work as a planner. This question is intended to expand our understanding of the role of planners in New Zealand by identifying the principles which guide planning practice. Two hundred and seventy individuals responded to this question. Prominent themes are identified, and then categorised by NZPI Membership, years of experience, identification as a Māori or Pasifika planner, employer type, field of tertiary qualification, and whether respondents had practiced planning outside of New Zealand.

THEMES

Moral principles were the most prominent response to the question 'Please list up to three key principles that underlie your work as a planner by a substantial margin'. Responses sorted into this category included a sense of integrity, equity, fairness, honesty, trust and similar sentiments. 43% (118) of respondents identified at least one moral principle as guiding their practice. Where respondents cited multiple types of moral principles, only one unit was recorded. The next most prevalent responses were: **Environmental sustainability** (27.4%), **Professional knowledge and expertise** (25.5%), and **Communication and collaboration** (23.3%). These responses are of approximately equal prevalence. The themes emerging from this analysis are shown in order of prominence in Table 2.

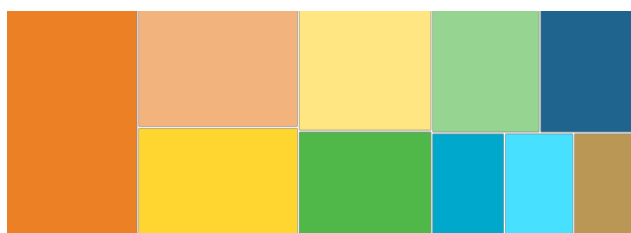


Table 2: Principles that underline planning practice

Principles	Responses: 270	%
<i>Moral principles</i>	118	21%
<i>Environmental sustainability</i>	74	13.1%
<i>Professional knowledge and expertise</i>	69	12.3%
<i>Communication and collaboration</i>	63	11.2%
<i>Ethics</i>	57	10.1%
<i>Critical thinking</i>	52	9.2%
<i>Balance and objectivity</i>	46	8.2%
<i>Quality outcomes</i>	30	5.3%
<i>Future focussed</i>	28	5%
<i>Community service</i>	26	4.6%



NZPI MEMBERSHIP

The themes identified have been categorised based on NZPI membership (see Figure 2). The purpose of this is to understand if and how underlying principles change with membership status. Associates are shown to have a higher likelihood of responding with "professional knowledge and expertise", "communication and collaboration", and "balance and objectivity". Full/fellow/honorary members are shown to have a higher likelihood of responding with "future-focussed", "moral principles", and "quality outcomes".

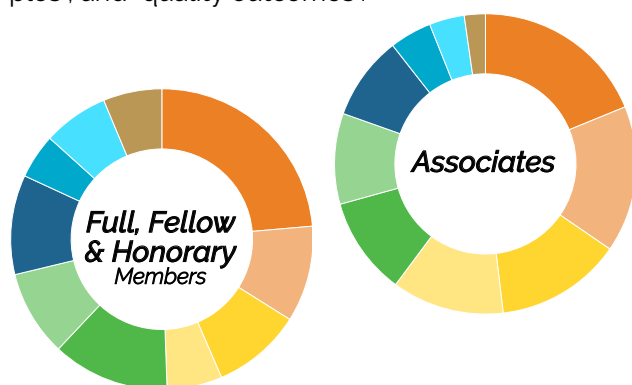


Figure 2: Principles underlining practice by NZPI Membership

MĀORI AND PASIFIKA

The themes identified have been categorised based on identification as Māori and Pasifika. The purpose of this is to understand if/how the principles underlying Māori and Pasifika planners differ from the general results. Practitioners identifying as Māori were more likely to respond with "moral principles" than the entire cohort (36% compared to 21%). Practitioners identifying as Pasifika were more likely to respond with "ethics" than the entire cohort (32% compared to 10%).

FIELD OF TERTIARY QUALIFICATION

The themes identified have been categorised based on respondents' field of tertiary qualification. The purpose of this is to understand if and how underlying principles change with educational experience. There was no noticeable difference in responses between fields of tertiary education.

YEARS OF EXPERIENCE

The themes identified have been categorised based on years of experience (see Figure 3 below). The purpose of this is to understand if and how underlying principles change with experience. The data shows that individuals in the early stages of their career (0-5) are more likely to have responded with "Environmental sustainability" than the other categories analysed.

The 21-30 category is more likely to have responded with "professional knowledge and expertise" than the other categories. Both more experienced categories are more likely to have responded with the principles "communication and collaboration" and "moral principles".

Overall, this suggests practitioners in the early stages of their career are guided more by environmental principles, whereas experienced practitioners are more concerned with inter-personal behaviours.



Figure 3: Principles underlining practice by experience

THE VALUE OF WHAT PLANNERS DO

This section provides an overview of the responses to the question: In one sentence, briefly describe the value of what you do as a planner, as you would explain it to a new acquaintance. This question is intended to expand our understanding of value that can be ascribed to planning work. Prominent themes are identified, and then categorised by NZPI Membership, years of experience, identification as a Māori or Pasifika planner, employer type, field of tertiary qualification, and whether respondents had practiced planning outside of New Zealand.

THEMES

The most prominent themes in the responses to the question, In one sentence, briefly describe the value of what you do as a planner, as you would explain it to a new acquaintance were "negotiation and balance" (26.8%) and "public interest" (26.1%). These were closely followed by "helping people build projects" (24%). Responses sorted into the "negotiation and balance" category typically mentioned bringing together people with conflicting ideas and needs and negotiating an acceptable or fair solution. Responses sorted into the "public interest" category typically mentioned shaping cities or guiding development to achieve the best outcomes for citizens. The "helping people build projects" category included responses concerned with planners acting as guides or navigators on behalf of clients, with the intention to make development processes easier and more achievable. The themes emerging from the analysis are shown in Table 3.

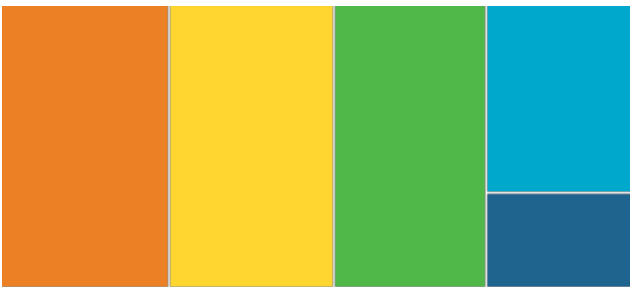


Table 3: The value of what you do as a planner

Value	Responses	%
<i>Negotiation and balance</i>	77	26.8%
<i>Public interest</i>	75	26.1%
<i>Helping people build projects</i>	69	24%
<i>Environmental and heritage protection</i>	44	15.3%
<i>Distil multi-disciplinary information</i>	22	7.7%

NZPI MEMBERSHIP

The themes identified have been categorised based on NZPI membership. The purpose of this is to understand if how respondents describe the value of what they do as a planner changes with NZPI membership status. There were no noticeable differences between these categories.

NEGOTIATION AND BALANCE

Respondents employed by infrastructure providers, local governments, and those who were self employed were more likely to respond with "negotiation and balance" as the value of what they do as planners. This suggests that managing conflict and finding compromises are a large part of the role of planners in these particular organisations. This finding regarding local government is particularly useful, as 103 of the total respondents sit in this category.

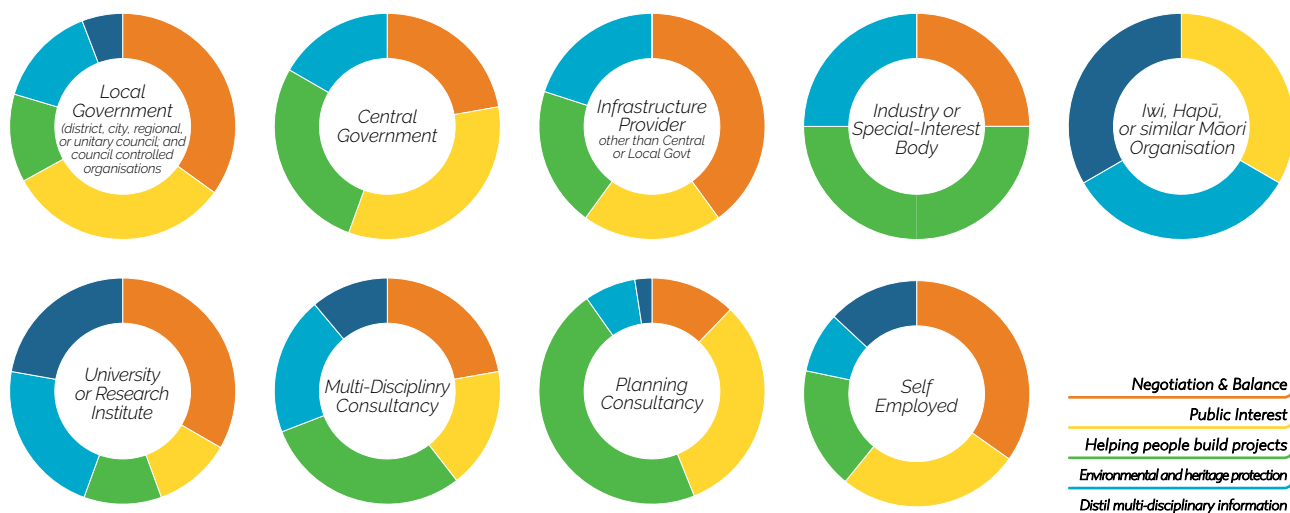


Figure 4: Planning values by employment type

EMPLOYER TYPE

The themes identified have been categorised based on employer type. The purpose of this is to understand if how respondents describe the value of what they do as a planner is influenced by employer type. There were many noticeable deviations from the cohort averages when sorted via employer. This suggests that employment type has a strong influence on how respondents describe the value of what they do as planners. Some of the most notable differences are discussed below. Figure 4 illustrates the distribution of each theme amongst the employment type categories.

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

Respondents employed by Iwi/Hapū, or similar Māori organisation were more likely to consider environmental and heritage protection as the value of what they do as planners than the cohort average (33.3% of those who worked in a Māori organisation compared to 15.3%). Respondents who were employed by industry or special interest bodies were also more likely to consider environmental and heritage protection as the value of what they do as planners than the cohort average (25% compared to 15.3%). This suggests that environmental and heritage protection may be a larger part of the role of planners who work for these particular organisations.

FIELD OF TERTIARY QUALIFICATION

The themes identified have been categorised based on whether respondents have a tertiary qualification in planning. The purpose of this is to understand if how respondents describe the value of what they do as a planner is influenced by if they hold a tertiary qualification in planning. The responses were largely similar for each theme except "negotiation and balance" where respondents with a planning qualification were more likely to describe this as the value of what they do as a planner than those without a planning qualification (30.2% compared to 20%).

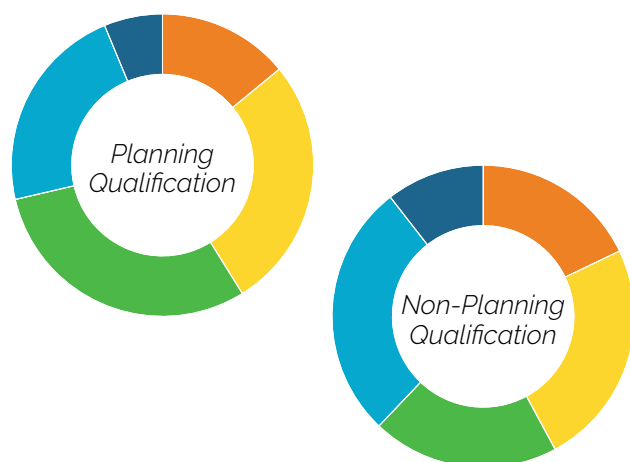


Figure 5: Planning values by qualification



COMPARISON OF CURRENT ROLES WITH ASPIRATIONS

This section provides an overview of the responses to two related questions: Please list three key words that come to mind when you think about what you do in your current role as a planner; and please list three key words that describe what you aspire to do as a planner. Prominent themes are identified. These themes are compared to understand the relationship between what planners currently do, and what they aspire to do.

THEMES

The question "list three key words that come to mind when you think about what you do in your current role as a planner" resulted in answers relatively evenly spread across 10 themes (see Table 4). The theme "communicate and collaborate" was the most prominent (14.6%), this theme groups answers concerning interaction with others. This can include with other planners, multi-disciplinary interaction, and interactions with the public.

Overall, the responses tended to be task-oriented. The even distribution between many different tasks illustrates the broad range of roles planners can take.

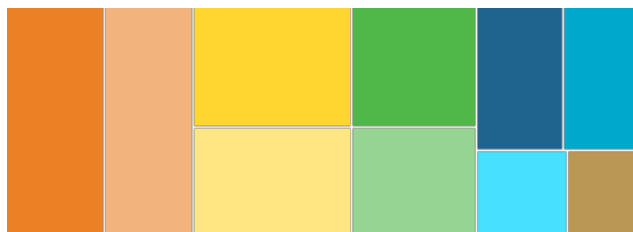


Table 4: Key words reflecting current role as a planner

Current Role	Responses: 295	%
<i>Communicate and collaborate</i>	81	14.60%
<i>Policy and strategy</i>	71	12.80%
<i>Consents and assessments</i>	67	12.10%
<i>Advise</i>	60	10.80%
<i>Balance and negotiate</i>	53	9.60%
<i>Management</i>	48	8.70%
<i>Research and analysis</i>	43	7.80%
<i>Mentorship</i>	37	6.70%
<i>Environmental sustainability</i>	27	4.90%
<i>Shape and develop cities</i>	21	3.80%



Table 5: Key words reflecting aspirational role as a planner

Aspirations for role	Responses: 289	%
<i>Improve outcomes</i>	112	32.10%
<i>Environmental sustainability</i>	71	20.30%
<i>Community and social outcomes</i>	42	12%
<i>Enable and achieve</i>	42	12%
<i>Help people</i>	41	11.70%
<i>Influence and inspire</i>	41	11.70%

Conversely, the answers to the question "list three key words that describe what you aspire to do as a planner" tended to be outcome-based (see Table 5). Themes were less evenly distributed, with the most prominent being "improve outcomes" (32.1%). This theme groups answers concerning improving or enhancing outcomes or creating positive change in a general way.

Specifically improving environmental outcomes (20.3%) and social outcomes (12%) have been grouped separately.

The only theme appearing in both current roles and aspirations is environmental sustainability. This theme was more prominent in the aspiration responses than in the current role responses (20.3% compared to 4.9%). This suggests that planners' current roles do not involve environmental sustainability to the extent aspired to.

SATISFACTION, MOTIVATION AND FRUSTRATION

This section provides an overview of the responses to the related questions: Briefly describe what gives you the most satisfaction from being a planner; what motivates you to work in the planning profession; and briefly describe what you find most frustrating about your role as a planner. Prominent themes have been identified, and then categorised by years of experience, employer type, and whether the respondents have practiced planning overseas. The purpose of this section is to understand what the rewarding elements of planning practice are and compare them to the more frustrating elements. Furthermore, it provides insights into if planners get satisfaction from, and are motivated by, the same things they aspire to do.

THEMES

Delivering positive outcomes (27.6%) was the most prominent theme in what gives planners satisfaction. Similarly, improving outcomes or making things better (39.7%) was the most prominent response to what motivates planners. Similar to the previous section, a focus on outcomes is prevalent. This illustrates a relationship between aspirations, and the parts of respondent's roles where they find satisfaction and motivation.

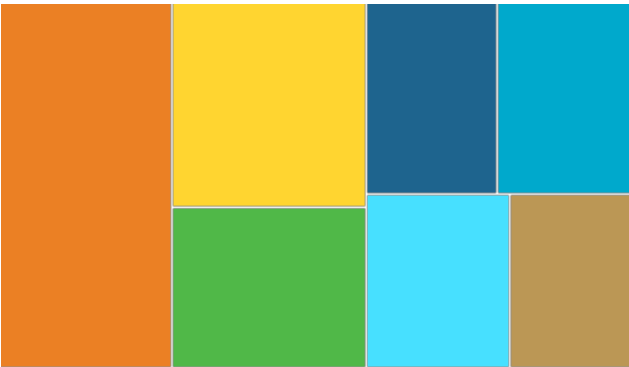


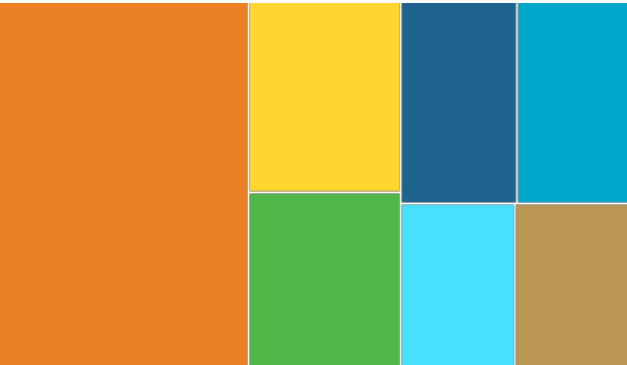
Table 6: Descriptors of what gives planners satisfaction in their roles

Themes	Responses: 290	%
Delivering positive outcomes	94	27.6%
Assisting clients	59	17.3%
Environmental sustainability	46	13.5%
Seeing projects become reality	37	10.9%
Community and social outcomes	37	10.9%
Problem solving	37	10.9%
Teamwork and mentorship	31	9.1%

The themes for the question "what motivates you to work in the planning profession?" can be split into two higher level themes: **Outcomes-focussed** and **Experience-focussed**. Experience-focussed themes include passion and enjoyment (10.2%), diversity of work opportunities (9.6%), good relationships with colleagues (8.2%), and the sense that planners are paid well and enjoy high job security (8.2%).

Table 7: Descriptors of what motivates planners in their roles

Themes	Responses: 278	%
Improve outcomes	136	39.7%
Influence and impact future	43	12.5%
Assisting clients	40	11.7%
Passion & enjoyment	35	10.2%
Diversity of work opportunities	33	9.6%
Good relationships with colleagues	28	8.2%
Remuneration and job security	28	8.2%



The third question “briefly describe what you find most frustrating about your role as a planner” could be used to understand barriers to satisfaction, or challenges to motivation. These responses have been categorised into three groups: **System issues**, **Practice issues** and **Under-valuing Planners**:

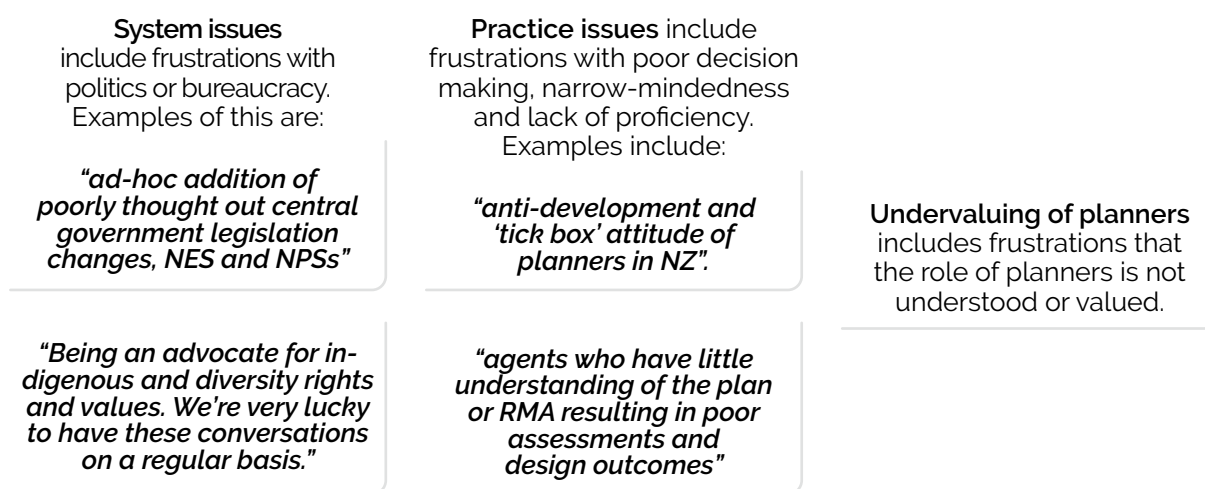


Table 8: Descriptors of what frustrates planners in their roles

Themes	Responses: 293	%
System issues	136	39.7%
Practice issues	43	12.5%
Undervaluing planners	40	11.7%

Over half of the respondents (56.5%) identified system issues as frustrating. These system issues were often seen as barriers to good outcomes – **“preoccupation with process, and lack of attention to outcomes”**. System issues were also seen as barriers to getting things done – **“long, drawn out, overly complex processes and requirements”**.

Other sentiments include a lack of clarity – **“unclear consultation pathways/ outcomes” and challenges keeping up with politics and legislative changes – “changing central government legislation and flow on effect to Councils”**.

A comparison between this result of frustration with system and process issues, and the results described earlier where approximately half of respondents described their role as a planner as being process-focused, highlights a potential issue for the profession. Considering some of the sentiments expressed by respondents, it appears there may be divergence and tension within the profession, between planners focused on process and outcomes, and planners focused on process. This divergence may reflect a difference between planners focusing on policy work and planners focusing on consents, with consent work having a reputation for being process-focused.

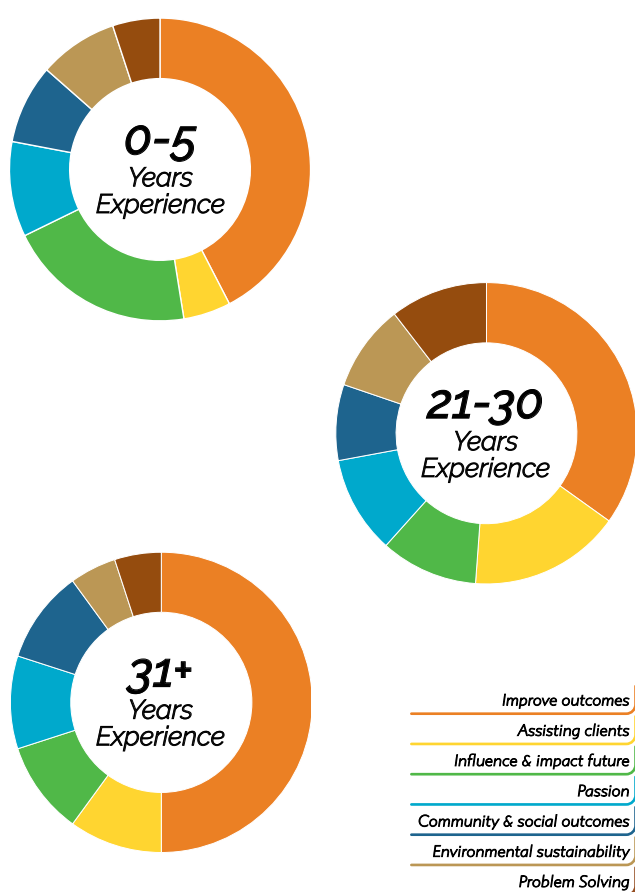


Figure 6: Motivation for role by years of experience

YEARS OF EXPERIENCE

For the question "what motivates you to work in the planning profession?", responses were further categorised by years of experience (see Figure 6).

Planners early in their career (0-5) were more likely to be motivated by influencing the future and having an impact than the cohort average (20.3% compared to 13.5%). The most experienced planners (31+) were more motivated to improve outcomes than the cohort average (50% compared to 40.5%). The 21-30 category were less likely to be motivated by improving outcomes (34.9% compared to 40.5%). The 0-5 years' experience category were less likely to be motivated by assisting clients compared to the cohort average (5.1% compared to 11.4%). The 21-30 years' experience group were more likely to be motivated by assisting clients (16.3% compared to 11.4%). This disparity suggests less experienced planners are not as motivated by assisting or helping clients, which may be due to their likelihood of holding junior roles with less client interaction.

This analysis illustrates that as planners gain experience, prominent motivations shift from having an impact, to being useful to and helping clients, to delivering improved outcomes. These results may reflect changing attitudes and values as planners progress in their careers, in particular, motivations seem to shift from an idealistic view, wanting to make a difference generally (influence and impact) to a more practical view, focused on clients and finding opportunities to make a difference in a more specific way (assisting clients and improving outcomes). A focus on improving outcomes may also reflect more experienced planners considering their legacy as they progress through their career.

All other responses were evenly distributed amongst categories, proportional to response rates.

PLANNING PRACTICE OUTSIDE OF NEW ZEALAND

The themes identified have been categorised based whether respondents have practiced overseas. The purpose of this is to understand if and how overseas experience influences how planners perceive the satisfying and frustrating elements of their roles. No noticeable differences were shown.

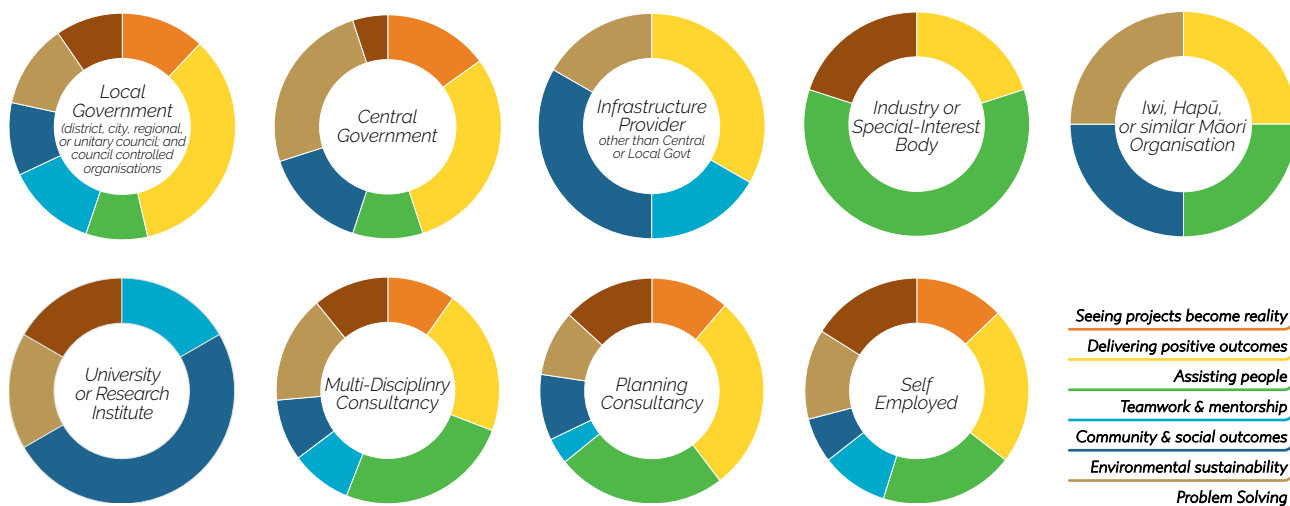


Figure 7: Satisfaction by employment type

EMPLOYER

The themes identified have been categorised based on employer (see Figures 7 and 8 below). The purpose of this is to understand if and how the aspects of practice which are either satisfying or frustrating differ between employment types. This helps to understand how the role of planners differs between employment types.

The most prominent responses to the "describe what gives you the most satisfaction" question varied significantly between employer types.

For local government, self-employed individuals, planning consultancies and multi-disciplinary consultancies, the responses are fairly evenly distributed across all themes.

University or research institutes, Iwi and Hapū authorities, non-government infrastructure providers and industry or special interest groups, the range is much narrower. This is potentially due to the comparatively small number of respondents from these employment types. Frustration with systemic issues was prominent amongst respondents categorised as central government employees (82%). This is closely followed by special interest bodies (60%) and self-employed people (62%).

The Iwi and Hapū authority or non-government infrastructure providers categories both reported zero sentiments that planning is undervalued. This could be due to the comparatively low number of respondents in these categories.

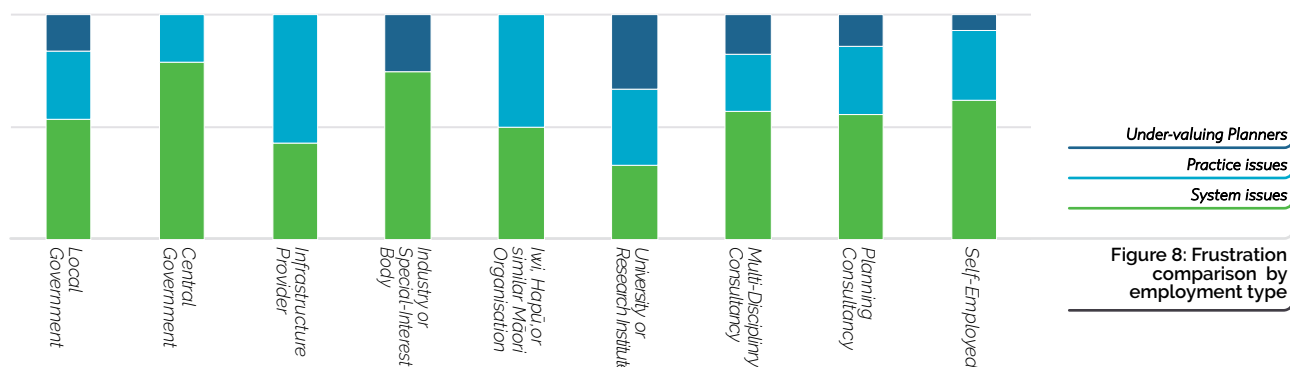


Figure 8: Frustration comparison by employment type

INFLUENCE OF MĀORI VALUES

This section provides an overview of the responses to the related questions: *What do you consider to be unique about your role as a planner in Aotearoa New Zealand, as opposed to what it might be in any other country, if anything;* and *how strongly do you agree or disagree with the statement “Te ao Māori (the Māori world view) has a strong influence on my role as a planner.”* Prominent themes have been identified, and then categorised by whether respondents identify as Māori and/or Pasifika, and whether they have practiced planning overseas.

UNIQUE ATTRIBUTES

The most common theme emerging from the question “What do you consider to be unique about your role as a planner in Aotearoa New Zealand, as opposed to what it might be in any other country, if anything?” was Māori views and values (53.6%) (see Table 9). Examples of responses sorted into this category include:

“Indigenous cultural awareness and inclusivity.”

“The underlying responsibility to working with mana whenua.”

“Being an advocate for indigenous and diversity rights and values. We’re very lucky to have these conversations on a regular basis.”

Another noticeable theme was the “environmental focus”. 10.7% of respondents felt that the focus on both preserving and enhancing the natural environmental was unique to planning practice in New Zealand.

The “other” category was made up of many different sentiments such as bureaucracy, small scale, uniqueness of the natural environment and hazards in New Zealand, broad scope, and the effects-based system. None of these sentiments were repeated to an extent comparable to “Māori views and values” or “Environmental focus.”



Table 9: Unique attributes of role of planner in New Zealand

Attributes	Responses: 250	%
Māori views and values	125	53.6%
Environmental focus	25	10.7%
No difference	11	4.7%
Other (varied)	72	30.9%



INFLUENCE OF TE AO MĀORI

The results show that the majority of respondents agree (44.4%) or strongly agree (21.5%) that Te ao Māori has a strong influence on their role as a planner (see Table 10 below). This is a total of 65.9% of respondents agreeing to some extent. Of the respondents who did not agree, the majority were neutral (22.2%) rather than explicitly disagreeing (10.4%).

COMPARISON

Together, these responses illustrate the importance of Te ao Māori to the role of planners in New Zealand. The framing of responses categorised as “Māori values and views” in response to the question “What do you consider to be unique about your role as a planner in Aotearoa New Zealand, as opposed to what it might be in any other country?” typically included positive connotations.

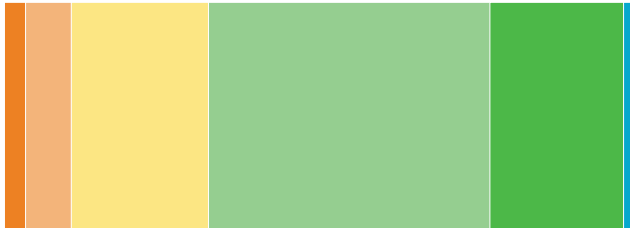


Table 10: Response to “Te ao Māori (the Māori world view) has a strong influence on my role as a planner.”

Sentiment	Responses: 299	%
Strongly disagree	9	3.0%
Disagree	22	7.4%
Neutral	66	22.2%
Agree	132	44.4%
Strongly agree	64	21.5%
Don't know	4	1.3%

MĀORI & PASIFIKA

UNIQUENESS OF ROLE OF PLANNER IN NEW ZEALAND

The themes identified have been categorised based on respondents’ identification as a Māori and/or Pasifika planner. The purpose of this is to understand if/how the Māori and Pasifika planner’s perception of what makes New Zealand practice unique differs from the general results.

Respondents who identified as Māori were more likely to respond that Māori views and values make planning practice in New Zealand unique than the cohort average (78% compared to 53.6%).

All responses categorised as “no-uniqueness” were by those identifying as non-Māori.

INFLUENCE OF TE AO MĀORI

The themes identified have been categorised based on respondents’ identification as a Māori and/or Pasifika planner. The purpose of this is to understand if Māori planners’ perceptions of how much influence Te ao Māori has on their role as planners differs from the general result. Māori respondents mostly strongly agreed with the statement.

Furthermore, no respondents who identify as Māori disagreed with the statement. This is not surprising and illustrates that cultural identity influences planners’ self-perception of their role.

There was no noticeable difference where responses were sorted by whether respondents identified as Pasifika.

PLANNING PRACTICE OUTSIDE OF NEW ZEALAND

The themes identified have been categorised based on whether respondents have practiced overseas. The purpose of this is to understand if and how overseas experience influences how planners perceive the unique qualities of planning in New Zealand.

Planners with experience in planning overseas were less likely to respond with “Māori values and views” to the question of what makes New Zealand practice unique, in comparison to planners with no overseas experience (46% compared to 58%).

“Māori views and values” was still the most prominent response in both groups.

VALUABLE STRENGTHS

This section provides an overview of the responses to the question: *What is your most valuable strength as a planner?* Prominent themes are identified, and then categorised by NZPI membership, years of experience, and whether respondents identify as Māori or Pasifika.

THEMES

The most prevalent theme emerging from the analysis is “communication and interpersonal skills”, which was mentioned by 29% of respondents (see Table 11). Responses using words such as empathy, patience, listening, writing, and communication were sorted into this category. Examples include:

“Articulate”

“Working with people”

“Communicating with staff, customers and politicians”



Table 11: What is your most valuable strength as a planner

Themes	Responses: 246	%
Communication and interpersonal skills	71	28.9%
Critical thinking skills	44	17.9%
Planning knowledge	41	16.7%
Ability to think holistically	39	15.9%
Interpret and synthesize information	27	11.0%
Experience	24	9.8%

NZPI MEMBERSHIP

The themes identified have been categorised based on NZPI membership. The purpose of this is to understand if and how strengths change with membership status. No noticeable differences between categories were found.

YEARS OF EXPERIENCE

The themes identified have been categorised based on years of experience (see Figure 9). The purpose of this is to understand if and how strengths change with experience. The responses varied based on years of experience.

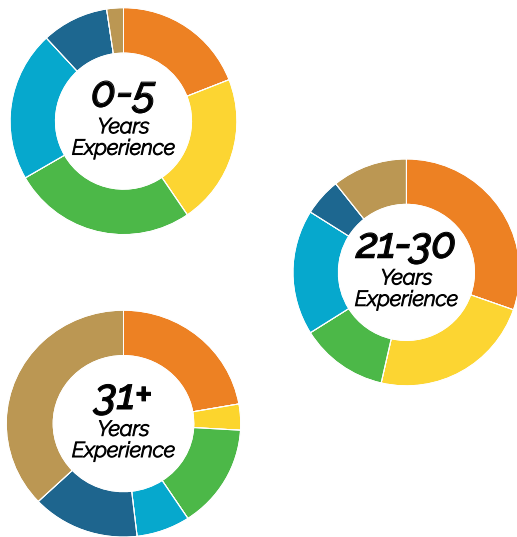


Figure 9: Most valuable strength by experience

Planners with 31+ years' experience were more likely to perceive "experience" as their most valuable strength than the cohort average (37% compared to 13.6%). This is an unsurprising result but shows that experience is valued by those who have it. Sentiments included that experience with plans and being able to remember the initial intentions of plans is very valuable.

Planners with 31+ years' experience were less likely to consider holistic thinking as their most valuable skill compared to the cohort average (7.4% compared to 16.8%). This group was also less likely to consider critical thinking skills as the most valuable than the cohort average (3.7% compared to 18.4%). This shows that the 31+ year group considers experience to be more valuable than holistic thinking and critical thinking skills, to a greater extent than other groups.

Planners with 0-5 years' experience were more likely to consider holistic thinking to be their most important strength. Their planning knowledge, such as knowledge of planning and urban design theories, and multi-disciplinary, and critical thinking skills were the next most valuable.

MĀORI AND PASIFIKA

The themes identified have been categorised based on whether respondents identify as Māori (see Table 12). The purpose of this is to understand if and how Māori respondents' perceptions of their valuable strengths differs from the general result.

Table 12: Most valuable strength as a Māori planner		
Themes	Responses: 15	%
Communication and interpersonal skills	7	46.7%
Critical thinking skills	2	13.3%
Planning knowledge	4	26.7%
Ability to think holistically	1	6.7%
Interpret and synthesize information	1	6.7%
Experience	-	-

Planners identifying as Māori were more likely to identify communication and interpersonal skills than those who do not identify as Māori (46.7% compared to 27.7%). Māori planners were also more likely to identify planning knowledge than non-Māori (26.7% compared to 16%). Māori respondents were less likely to value holistic thinking than non-Māori (6.7% compared to 16.5%). They were also less likely to value the ability to interpret and synthesise information than non-Māori (6.7% compared to 11.3%). No Māori planners identified experience as their most valuable strength.

Planners who identified as Pasifika were more likely to value critical thinking skills than planners who do not identify as Pasifika (50% compared to 16.5%).

Table 13: Most valuable strength as a Pasifika planner		
Themes	Responses: 10	%
Communication and interpersonal skills	3	30%
Critical thinking skills	5	50%
Planning knowledge	1	10%
Ability to think holistically	1	10%
Interpret and synthesize information	-	-
Experience	-	-

HOW PLANNERS THINK DIFFERENTLY

The section provides an overview of the responses to the question: ***Do you consider that a planner has a particular way of thinking that is different to other professionals, and if so, how?*** Prominent themes have been identified, and then categorised by NZPI membership, years of experience, identification as Māori and/or Pasifika, and field of tertiary qualification.

THEMES

From the data shown in Table 13, it is clear that the majority of respondents consider planners to have a different way of thinking to other professionals. Of the 85.9% of respondents who felt this way, two prevalent themes emerged (see Table 15).

The first is that planners balance and weigh multiple viewpoints and technical inputs (45%). Answers sorted into this theme discussed a planner's ability to integrate numerous considerations, understand how things are interconnected, distil information, and join the dots. An example is "We take a broad approach and collate the views and needs of many disciplines and people."

The second is that planners are holistic thinkers (32.3%). Answers sorted into this theme discussed how planners keep their minds on the big picture and consider a range of values. Responses were often assigned both themes. Of note, when a respondent expanded on holistic thinking, they often identified balancing and weighing competing interests or considering multiple perspectives or disciplines as the explanation of holistic thinking. An example is "Thinking holistically about things and weighing up options and making decisions on balance after considering everything required."

A way of thinking that balances multiple inputs and considers different viewpoints aligns strongly with the identification of moral principles as the most prominent principles underling the work of planners (discussed above). Integrity, equity and fairness are important aspects of a balancing and weighing exercise.

Holistic thinking was identified as one of the most valued strengths of planners (see section above). This correlation with responses to how planners think differently reinforces holistic thinking as a particularly notable aspect of the role of the planner.



Table 14: 'Do planners think differently?'

Sentiment	Responses: 298	%
Yes	256	85.9%
No	24	8%
Don't Know	18	6%

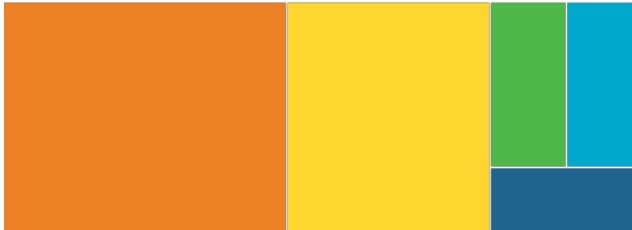


Table 15: "How do planners think differently from other professions?"

Themes	Responses: 250	%
Balance multiple inputs	127	45.0%
Holistic thinkers	91	32.3%
Strategic and analytical thinkers	24	8.5%
Ability to think within the NZ planning framework	22	7.8%
Effects-based thinking	18	6.4%

NZPI MEMBERSHIP

The themes identified have been categorised based on NZPI membership. No noticeable differences between respondents from different membership categories were found.

MĀORI AND PASIFIKA

The themes identified have been categorised based on whether respondents identify as Māori (see Figure 10 below) or Pasifika.

The responses vary markedly between Māori and non-Māori. Planners identifying as Māori are more likely to consider planners' holistic thinking unique compared to non-Māori (46.7% compared to 31.5%). As there is a strong relationship between holistic thinking and Te ao Māori, it may be that Māori planners consider holistic thinking ordinary rather than unique, even if they strongly value it as shown in the "influence of Māori values" section. Māori planners were also more likely to identify "effects-based thinking" as unique to planners than non-Māori (20% compared to 5.6%).

Māori respondents were less likely to identify "balance multiple inputs" as a unique way of thinking than non-Māori (26.7% compared to 46.1%).

When sorted by whether planners identify as Pasifika, no noticeable differences were identified.

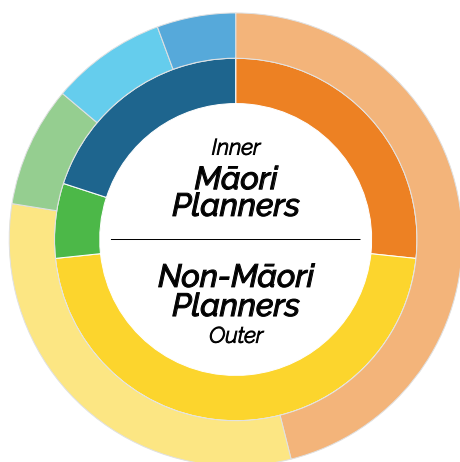


Figure 10: 'How do planners think differently' by identity comparison

YEARS OF EXPERIENCE

The themes identified have been categorised based on years of experience.

Planners early in their careers (0-5 years' experience) were less likely to consider holistic thinking as unique compared to the cohort average (20.4% compared to 31.3%). Planners in the most experienced category were more likely to consider holistic thinking unique (39.5% compared to 31.3%). This illustrates that the perception of holistic thinking as unique increases with experience. "Holistic thinking" has appeared frequently as a theme across multiple questions.

FIELD OF TERTIARY QUALIFICATION

No noticeable differences were identified when responses were categorised by whether respondents had a degree in planning or another field.



FUTURE CHANGE TO THE ROLE OF PLANNERS

This section provides an overview of the responses to the questions: *How do you think the role of the planner will change in the future, if at all?* Prominent themes are identified, and then categorised by years of experience and employer type.

THEMES

The responses show two prevalent themes: increased system issues (27.2%) and increased use of artificial intelligence (AI) and data technology (26.8%) (see Table 16 below).

Responses were categorised as “system issues” where they mentioned changing political dynamics between central and local government, technocracy, and challenging legislative changes. Interestingly, system issues made up 56.5% of responses to the question Briefly describe what you find most frustrating about your role as a planner. Together, these responses suggest planners are concerned about the impact increased system issues will have on their future roles.

Responses were categorised as “increased use of AI and data technology” where they mentioned the greater availability and accuracy of data, and increased automation within planning practice. Interestingly, these responses included a mix of positive and negative sentiments. These responses were also occasionally attached to other themes such as “increased strategy and spatial focus”. An example of this overlap is “I think we will move more into a strategy space as consenting becomes more automated and tick-box, we will also move into more of a compliance space.”

The analysis also shows hope that the identified frustration at the undervaluing of planners may improve. It also shows hope that planners’ aspirations and motivations to improve outcomes and focus on environmental issues such as climate change and sustainability may become more achievable in the future.

As discussed above, holistic thinking has been identified as a unique and valuable aspect of planners’ roles. Some responses to this question discussed planners becoming less holistic or more specialised in the future, which could reflect fear amongst respondents of losing this unique and valuable attribute



Table 16: How do you think the role of the planner will change in the future, if at all?

Current Role	Responses: 295	%
<i>Increased system issues</i>	64	27.20%
<i>Increased use of AI and data technology</i>	63	26.80%
<i>Increased climate change focus</i>	28	12.30%
<i>Increased strategy and spatial focus</i>	18	7.70%
<i>Better reputation</i>	16	6.80%
<i>More specialised (less holistic)</i>	12	5.10%
<i>Increased outcome focus</i>	12	5.10%
<i>No meaningful change</i>	21	8.90%

YEARS OF EXPERIENCE

The themes identified have been categorised based on years of experience, showing some variations in perspectives between groups (see Figure 11 below).

Planners in the early stage of their career (0-5 years' experience) were less likely to identify "Increased use of AI and data technology" as a way the role of the planner may change than the total average (19.4% compared to 25.2%). Planners with 21-30 years' experience were more likely to identify "Increased use of AI and data technology" as a way the role of the planner may change (32.8% compared to 25.2%). This may reflect that in more recent education and early work experience, the use of AI and data technology has been normalised.

The most experienced group (31+) were more likely to identify "increased climate change focus" as a way the role of the planner may change than the total average (24.1% compared to 13.8%). Respondents in this group were also more likely to identify "no meaningful change" for the future than the total average (10.3% compared to 6.5%).

Planners in the early stage of their careers (0-5 years' experience) are also more likely to indicate "More specialised (less holistic)" as a way the role of the planner may change than the total average (8.3% compared to 4.9%). This suggests a sentiment that more specialist knowledge and skills will be important for their future careers.

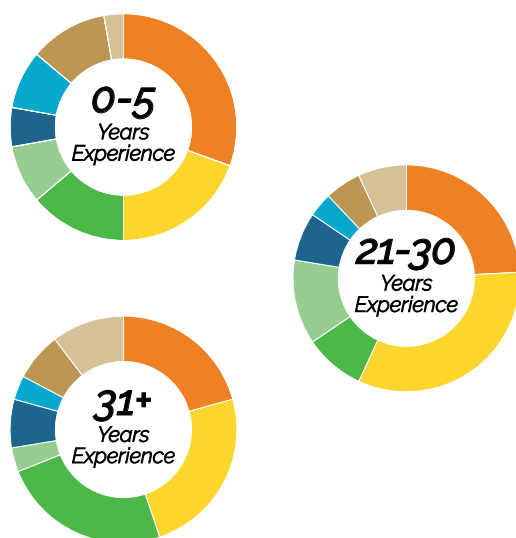


Figure 11: Future changes to role by experience

EMPLOYER

The themes identified have been categorised based on type of employer (see Figure 12). To limit the complexity associated with a large range of variables, the themes have been limited to the two most prominent - increased system issues (27.2%) and increased use of AI and data technology (26.8%).

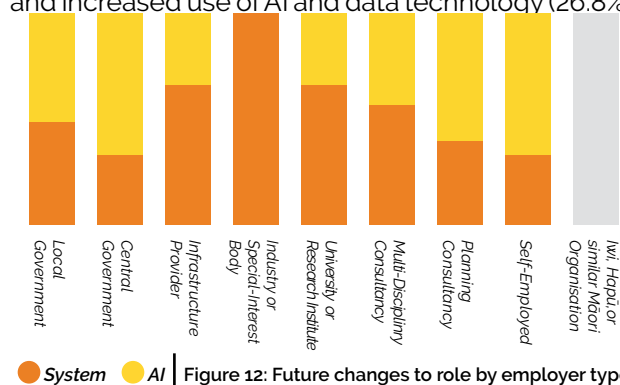


Figure 12: Future changes to role by employer type

The analysis shows that individuals in the "self-employed" and "central government" categories are most likely to identify "Increased use of AI and data technology" as a way the role of the planner may change than respondents in other types of employment. Planning consultancies and local government employees were also more likely to mention AI and data than the cohort average, but to a lesser extent than self-employed and central government. This suggests planners practicing in both private and public practice expect changes as a result of AI and data technology.

Individuals in special interest groups, non-government infrastructure providers, university or research institutes, and multi-disciplinary consultancies are more likely to identify "increased system issues" as a way the role of the planner may change. These are planners who are more likely to work with the system 'from the outside', rather than from within a council, for example, and therefore be in less control of systems and processes. We would expect them to be more focused on changes to systems when this is something they have less control over.

Interestingly, no one working for an Iwi or Hapū authority identified either theme as a way the role of the planner may change.

THE IMPACT OF LEGISLATION ON THE ROLE OF PLANNERS

This section provides an overview of the responses to the statements: The requirements of the Resource Management Act 1991 have a strong influence on my role as a planner; and new legislation (in whatever form) will change the role of the planner. Respondents were asked to give a rating on a spectrum of strongly disagree to strongly agree. Prominent themes have been identified, and then categorised by years of experience and field of tertiary qualification.

IMPACT OF RMA

The results show that the majority of respondents agree (39.3%) or strongly agree (46.6%) that the requirements of the RMA have a strong influence on their role as a planner (see Table 16 below). This is a total of 85.6% of respondents agreeing to some extent. This suggests the RMA has a substantial influence on the role of planners.

IMPACT OF NEW LEGISLATION

The results show that the majority of respondents agree (35.8%) or strongly agree (29.1%) that new legislation (in whatever form) will change the role of the planner (see Table 17 below). This is a total of 64.9% of respondents agreeing to some extent.

COMPARISON

Interestingly, a smaller proportion of respondents think that new legislation will change planning practice, compared to the degree of influence the current legislation has on their role as a planner. There are two possible explanations for this. One is that respondents consider that new legislation will not have as great an influence on the role of planners as the RMA has, the implication being that the RMA has had a high degree of influence. The other is that respondents consider that new legislation will retain some features of the RMA, and therefore not cause a significant shift away from the requirements of the RMA such that the role of a planner fundamentally changes.

Together, the responses to these questions suggest that legislation is perceived to be a strong influence on the role of the planner.



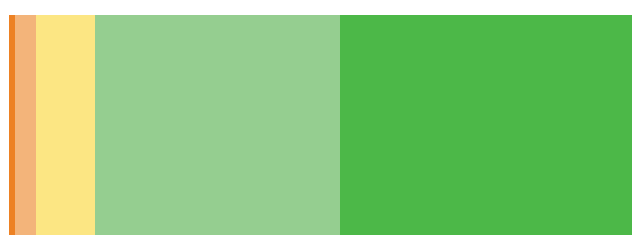


Table 17: Response to "The requirements of the Resource Management Act 1991 have a strong influence on my role as a planner."

Sentiment	Responses: 299	%
<i>Strongly disagree</i>	3	1.0%
<i>Disagree</i>	10	3.4%
<i>Neutral</i>	28	9.4%
<i>Agree</i>	117	39.3%
<i>Strongly agree</i>	139	46.6%
<i>Don't know</i>	1	0.3%



Table 18: Response to "New legislation (in whatever form) will change the role of the planner."

Sentiment	Responses: 299	%
<i>Strongly disagree</i>	11	3.7%
<i>Disagree</i>	27	9.0%
<i>Neutral</i>	58	19.4%
<i>Agree</i>	107	35.8%
<i>Strongly agree</i>	64	29.1%
<i>Don't know</i>	9	3.0%

NZPI MEMBERSHIP

The responses to the statement, The requirements of the Resource Management Act 1991 have a strong influence on my role as a planner have been categorised based on the NZPI Membership statuses of Associate and Full/Fellow/Honorary.

The results show that both membership groups typically agree with the statement to some extent – Associate (85.9%), Full/Fellow/Honorary (89.8%). Where the individuals do not agree with the statement, Full/Fellow/Honorary members tend to be less extreme in their disagreement, as their responses are focused in the neutral and disagree categories. No Full/Fellow/Honorary members strongly disagreed. Full/Fellow/Honorary were also less likely to strongly agree with the statement. This suggests that while the groups are generally in agreement, the Full/Fellow/Honorary group feels more moderately about the statement.

FIELD OF TERTIARY QUALIFICATION

The themes identified have been categorised based on field of tertiary qualification. The purpose of this is to understand if and how perception of the impact of new legislation differs with educational experience. No noticeable differences between categories were found.





RELEVANCE OF QUALIFICATIONS TO ROLE

This section provides an overview of the responses to the statement: My qualification(s) prepared me well for my role as a planner. Respondents were asked to give a rating on a spectrum of strongly disagree to strongly agree. Results have been summarised (see Table 18 below) and then categorised by NZPI membership and field of tertiary education.

The result show that the majority of respondents (70.8%) agree or strongly agree that their qualification prepared them well for their role as a planner. The majority of the remainder felt neutral about the proposition (18.5%).

NZPI MEMBERSHIP

The responses have been categorised based on NZPI Membership category. No noticeable differences were found between categories.



Table 19: Response to "My qualification(s) prepared me well for my role as a planner."

Sentiment	Responses: 299	%
Strongly disagree	7	2.3%
Disagree	24	8.0%
Neutral	55	18.5%
Agree	137	46.0%
Strongly agree	74	24.8%
Don't know	1	0.3%

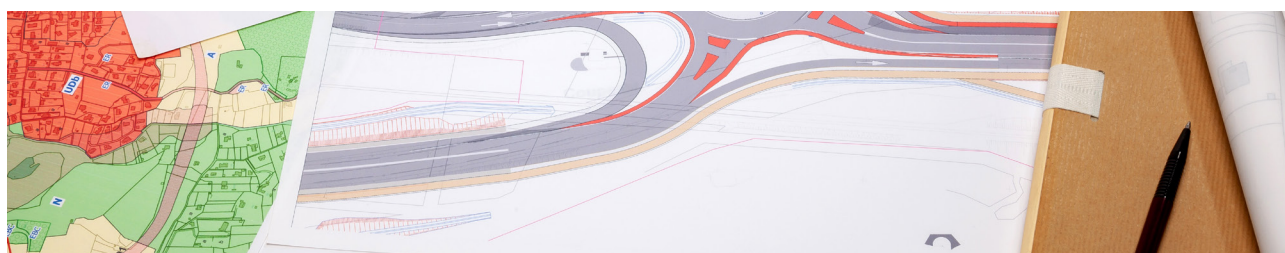
FIELD OF TERTIARY QUALIFICATION

The responses have been characterised by whether the respondent has a qualification in the field of planning or in another field. The purpose of this is to understand if type of education impacts respondents' perception of preparedness.

Respondents with a qualification in planning were more likely to report feeling well prepared for their role compared to respondents without a planning qualification (76.1% compared to 64.5%).

Respondents without a planning qualification were more likely to feel neutral about how well their qualification prepared them for their role than respondents with a planning qualification (24.4% compared to 16.4%).

There was no noticeable difference in disagreement with the statement between those with qualifications in the field of planning and those with qualifications in another field. The results suggest that field of qualification has no influence on planners feeling unprepared for their roles. Planners can feel well prepared with a range of different tertiary qualifications but are more likely to feel well prepared if they have completed a planning degree.



SUMMARY

The 2023 role of the planner survey has provided insight into how we see ourselves as a discipline. This survey confirms several trends that support what we have heard from the industry. This analysis will be used by NZPI to develop a position paper on the identity and role of planners in New Zealand. In the context of legislative change, and the recent change of governing party in New Zealand, this data will be a valuable tool for NZPI to represent the needs of planners in New Zealand and to nurture, cultivate, promote, and celebrate these fundamental aspects and secure the place of the profession into the future.

The analysis shows that the role of planners is evenly mixed between solely process-based and concerned with processes and outcomes. This confirms a long-standing divide reported by the industry between planners whose roles are only concerned with process, and planners whose roles are equally concerned with processes and outcomes. Planners in New Zealand report moral principles as the most common principle informing their practice. Descriptions of roles and principles vary by NZPI Membership, years of experience, and cultural identity. The value of what planners do is reported as including negotiation and balance, providing for the public interest, and helping people build projects. The value reported varied across employer type.

In the comparison between current role and aspirations for role, only one theme appeared in both – environmental sustainability. This theme appeared more frequently in planners' aspirations, suggesting planners do not get as many opportunities to include environmental sustainability in the current role as they aspire to.

As expected, the aspect most satisfying to respondents was also the most motivating. This aspect was positive outcomes. The key difference between these data sets was that respondents were satisfied by delivering positive outcomes and motivated by the desire to improve outcomes. Frustrating elements of roles were split into three categories: system issues, practice issues and the undervaluing of planners. Each of these elements were largely seen as interfering with a respondent's capability to deliver positive outcomes. Satisfactions, motivations, and frustrations varied based on years of experience (career stage) and type of employment.

Te ao Māori has been shown to have an influence on the role of planners in New Zealand. This was seen in response to questions regarding what (if any) elements of planning practice are unique to New Zealand, and how strongly respondents agreed or disagreed with the statement "Te ao Māori (the Māori world view) has a strong influence on my role as a planner". Results differed based on cultural identity and experience practicing overseas.

Respondents reported communication and interpersonal skills as their most valuable strength. The remaining themes of critical thinking skills, planning knowledge, holistic thinking, and ability to interpret and synthesise information were relatively evenly distributed. Most valuable skills varied across demographics such as years of experience and cultural identity. Early career planners were more likely to consider planning and multi-disciplinary knowledge as most valuable. Planners identifying as Māori were more likely to value communication and interpersonal skills than the average.

The analysis shows planners tend to think of themselves as a balanced or a holistic thinker. These attributes are seen as unique ways planners think compared to other professions. These responses varied by years of experience and cultural identity. Early career planners were less likely to consider holistic thinking unique compared to their more experience peers. This suggests that amongst less experienced planners, either holistic thinking is not considered exclusive to planning, or they consider it less important than other unique qualities.

System issues and artificial intelligence (AI) are equally considered most likely to impact the role of planners in the future by respondents. The anticipation of the transformative impact of AI is consistent with feedback from the industry. Responses suggest AI will enable better decision making, reduce time and effort spent on monitoring and compliance, and result in a shift towards more time spent on strategic thinking and spatial planning. Further analysis into the positive or negative connotations of responses would be useful, as they currently appear to be mixed.

A majority of respondents agree that the Resource Management Act 1991 (RMA) has had a strong influence on their role as a planner. Furthermore, the majority of respondents agree that any legislative change will have an impact on their role. However, less respondents think that new legislation will impact planning practice than those who believe the current legislation has a strong influence on their role as a planner. This discrepancy suggests these respondents feel that either new legislation will not have as great an influence on their role as the RMA has (implying the RMA has had an unusually high level of influence) or that any new legislation will not cause a significant enough shift away from the requirements of the RMA that the role of a planner fundamentally changes.

A majority of respondents (70.8%) agree that their tertiary qualification prepared them well for their role. Respondents with a tertiary qualification in planning were slightly more likely to agree that they were well prepared for their role. Of respondents without a tertiary degree in planning, more respondents were neutral about their preparedness than those with a tertiary degree in planning, and few disagreed with the statement outright.

APPENDIX I: SURVEY QUESTIONS

I. DEMOGRAPHIC QUESTIONS

A) WHAT TYPE OF NZPI MEMBERSHIP DO YOU HAVE?

- Full/Fellow/Honorary
- Intermediate
- Graduate
- Student
- Inactive
- Associate
- None

B. HOW MANY YEARS HAVE YOU BEEN WORKING WITHIN THE PLANNING PROFESSION?

- 0-5 •6-10 •11-20
- 21-30 •31+

C)DO YOU IDENTIFY AS A MĀORI PLANNER?

- Yes •No

D) DO YOU IDENTIFY AS A PASIFIKA PLANNER?

- Yes •No

E) WHAT TYPE OF EMPLOYER DO YOU WORK FOR?

- Central government
- Industry or special interest body
- Infrastructure provider
(other than central or local government)
- Iwi authority, hapū, or similar Māori organisation
- Local government
(district/city/regional/unitary council/
council-controlled organisation)
- Multi-disciplinary consultancy
- Planning consultancy
- Self employed
- University or research institute
- Other type of employer
– free text box

F) WHAT TYPE OF PLANNING WORK HAS BEEN YOUR MAIN FOCUS OVER THE LAST 12 MONTHS:

- Central government policy or legislation development
- Preparing regional and/or district policies and plans, including changes
- Commissioner work
- Monitoring and enforcement activities (including plan effectiveness monitoring)
- Management of planning staff or a planning business
- Managing and/or preparing resource consent applications for applicants
- Participating on behalf of a submitter(s) in policy, plan or consent processes (central or local government)
- Planning teaching and/or research
- Processing resource consent applications
- Providing strategic in-house planning advice
- Other type of planning work
– free text box

G) WHAT IS YOUR HIGHEST LEVEL OF TERTIARY QUALIFICATION?

- Undergraduate degree, diploma or equivalent
- Post-graduate degree (e.g. masters, PhD)
- Do not hold a tertiary qualification
- Other type of tertiary qualification – free text box

H) IF YOU HOLD A TERTIARY QUALIFICATION(S), WHAT FIELD(S) IS IT IN?

- Planning
- Environmental or resource management
- Environmental science
- Geography (physical or human)
- Law
- Urban design
- Other field – free text box

I) IF YOU HOLD A TERTIARY QUALIFICATION, DID YOU GAIN IT IN NEW ZEALAND?

- Yes •No

J) IF YOU HOLD A TERTIARY PLANNING QUALIFICATION, IS IT ACCREDITED BY A PROFESSIONAL BODY?

- Yes •No •Don't know

IF YES, WHICH PROFESSIONAL BODY?

- Free text box

K) HAVE YOU PRACTICED PLANNING OUTSIDE OF NEW ZEALAND?

- Yes •No

2-15. ROLE OF THE PLANNER QUESTIONS

2. PLEASE LIST THREE KEY WORDS THAT COME TO MIND WHEN YOU THINK ABOUT WHAT YOU DO IN YOUR CURRENT ROLE AS A PLANNER.

-Free text box

3. PLEASE LIST THREE KEY WORDS THAT DESCRIBE WHAT YOU ASPIRE TO DO AS A PLANNER.

-Free text box

4. WHAT IS YOUR MOST VALUABLE STRENGTH AS A PLANNER?

-Free text box

5. BRIEFLY DESCRIBE WHAT GIVES YOU THE MOST SATISFACTION FROM BEING A PLANNER

-Free text box

6. BRIEFLY DESCRIBE WHAT YOU FIND MOST FRUSTRATING ABOUT YOUR ROLE AS A PLANNER.

-Free text box

7. IN ONE SENTENCE, BRIEFLY DESCRIBE YOUR ROLE AS A PLANNER, AS YOU WOULD EXPLAIN IT TO A SIX-YEAR-OLD.

-Free text box

8. IN ONE SENTENCE, BRIEFLY DESCRIBE THE VALUE OF WHAT YOU DO AS A PLANNER, AS YOU WOULD EXPLAIN IT TO A NEW ACQUAINTANCE.

-Free text box

9. DO YOU CONSIDER THAT A PLANNER HAS A PARTICULAR WAY OF THINKING THAT IS DIFFERENT TO OTHER PROFESSIONALS?

•Yes •No •Don't know

IF YES, PLEASE DESCRIBE IN ONE SENTENCE WHAT YOU CONSIDER TO BE THE PLANNER WAY OF THINKING.

-Free text box

10. PLEASE LIST UP TO THREE KEY PRINCIPLES THAT UNDERLIE YOUR WORK AS A PLANNER.

-Free text box

11. WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER TO BE UNIQUE ABOUT YOUR ROLE AS A PLANNER IN AOTEAROA NEW ZEALAND, AS OPPOSED TO WHAT IT MIGHT BE IN ANY OTHER COUNTRY, IF ANYTHING?

-Free text box

12. WHAT MOTIVATES YOU TO WORK IN THE PLANNING PROFESSION?

-Free text box

13. HOW DO YOU THINK THE ROLE OF THE PLANNER WILL CHANGE IN THE FUTURE, IF AT ALL?

-Free text box

14. HOW STRONGLY DO YOU AGREE WITH THE FOLLOWING STATEMENTS:

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Neutral
- Agree
- Strongly Agree
- Don't know

A) My qualification(s) prepared me well for my role as a planner.

B) The requirements of the Resource Management Act 1991 have a strong influence on my role as a planner.

C) Te ao Māori (the Māori world view) has a strong influence on my role as a planner.

D) New legislation (in whatever form) will change the role of the planner.

15. IS THERE ANYTHING ELSE YOU WOULD LIKE TO TELL US ABOUT YOUR VIEWS ON THE ROLE OF THE PLANNER IN AOTEAROA NEW ZEALAND?

-Free text box



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NEW ZEALAND PLANNING INSTITUTE