



New Zealand  
**Planning Institute®**  
Te Kokiringa Taumata

# NZPI SALARY SURVEY

## 2014



***“Empowering planners; promoting planning excellence”***

*May 2015*



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## INTRODUCTION

It is with much pleasure that I welcome you to the New Zealand Planning Institute's Annual Salary Survey 2015 (relating to 2014 calendar year).

The NZPI Salary Survey has become the 'go to' document for many Human Resource specialists associated with the planning profession. It is also widely used by Managers to both establish salary ranges for new planning positions and to inform increases in salary for incumbents.

The Salary Survey's success is based upon the large response we receive from members i.e. from 239 responses in 2009 to over 600 responses in 2015. This increase in participation has contributed to a more robust snapshot of remuneration, qualifications, and conditions within the planning profession, making it a valuable source of information for members and recruiters.

In 2015, NZPI has added a new section to the Salary Survey, that demonstrates a number of trends within the profession over the past five years. The trend analysis demonstrates a remarkably stable profession in terms of remuneration and characteristics.

A very warm thanks to all those who participated in the survey. Should you have a query regarding the content of the report, or indeed, suggestions as to how it can be improved, then please phone or email Susan Houston, CEO of NZPI on 09 520 6277 ext 3 or [susan.houston@planning.org.nz](mailto:susan.houston@planning.org.nz)

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read 'Bryce Julian'.

Bryce Julian

***Chair of NZPI***

## METHODOLOGY

In an effort to maintain alignment with methodology established in previous annual salary surveys, the work locations of planners have been categorised as follows:

- Category 1 - Auckland (includes overseas responses)
- Category 2 - Christchurch
- Category 3 - Wellington
- Category 4 - The rest of NZ

The job categories have been dissected as follows:

- Category 1 - Director, including senior academics and CEO's
- Category 2 - Manager
- Category 3 - Senior level positions, including senior planners, senior policy analysts, senior resource consent planners and team leaders, lecturers
- Category 4 - Planners, including policy analysts, resource consent planners and any other titles
- Category 5 - Associates/Principals (this includes private and public sector 'principals')

Organisations in which planners work have been simplified into three categories in keeping with past methodology:

- Category 1 - Private Consultancy, multidisciplinary consultancies
- Category 2 - Councils including, council controlled organisations, unitary authorities and city, district and regional
- Category 3 - Central Government
- Category 4 - Others including university employees and not for profits

Young Planners have been defined as those who have five or less years experience in planning.

As in previous years, the data provided reflects the median of the responses received. The main advantage of the median is that it is not affected by outliers as the mean is and the mode can be. In distributions with a clear skew, such as housing prices or wages, using the median provides a better estimate of what the "average" is.



### NZPI Purpose

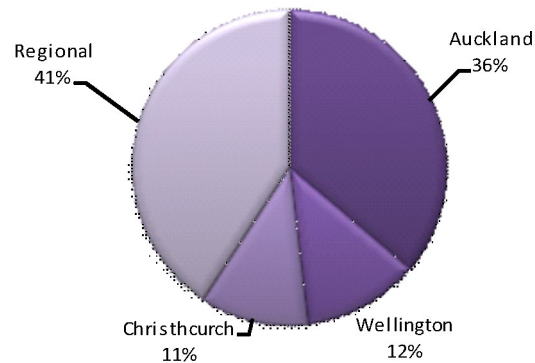
NZPI is the home of the planning profession and achieves a better future for NZ by championing the profession, promoting excellence and supporting its members.

## PROFILE OF RESPONDENTS

The following graphs reflect a collation of the raw data collected from the 648 respondents who took part in the 2014 survey.

### LOCATION OF PLANNERS

41% of respondents were located outside of Auckland, Wellington and Christchurch (up from 34% in 2014). 36% of respondents were located within Auckland (no change from 2013), 11% within Christchurch (down 2% from 2013), and 12% within Wellington (no change from 2013).

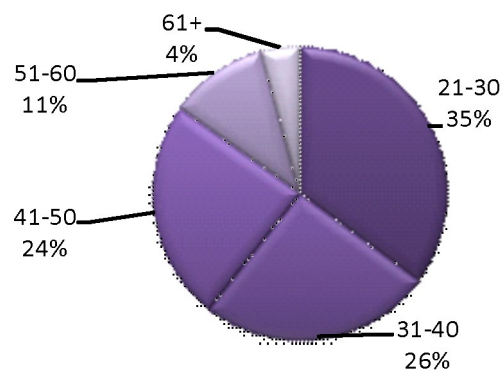


### GENDER OF PLANNERS

45% of those who responded to this question were male (down 2% from previous year) with the remaining 55% of respondents female (up 2% from previous year.)

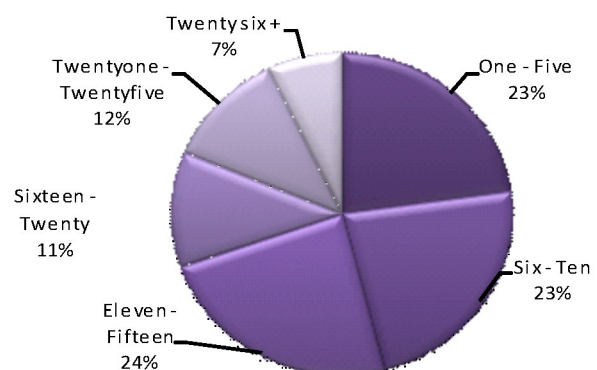
### AGE OF PLANNERS

Planners ranged in age from 21 - 70+ with over 61% of respondents to this question falling within the 21- 40 age bracket.



### YEARS OF EXPERIENCE

Ranging from less than a year to an impressive 47 years in the planning profession, 46% of respondents possessed between one to ten years experience as a planner (down 7% from 2014). The next largest group of 24% possess eleven to fifteen years of experience within the planning profession.



# QUALIFICATIONS AND ACCREDITATION

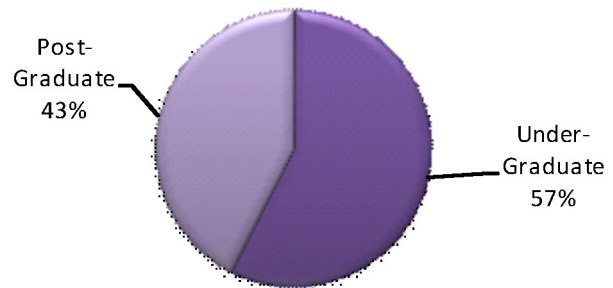


## TYPE OF QUALIFICATION

80% of all respondents possessed a planning qualification (up 2% from previous year) whilst 20% possessed a non-planning qualification.

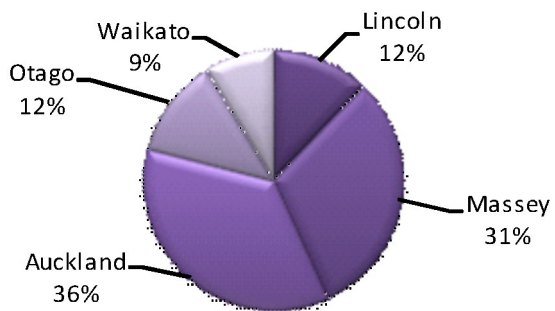
## LEVEL OF QUALIFICATION

57% of respondents possessed an undergraduate degree i.e. a Bachelors Degree or less. A further 43% possessing a post graduate degree, i.e. a PhD or Masters. Again, this is consistent with responses from previous years.



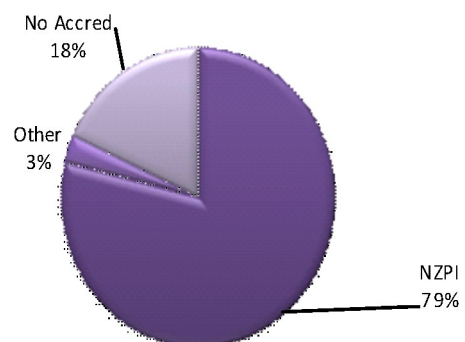
## UNIVERSITY CHOICE

The following pie chart depicts the current accredited universities within New Zealand at which respondents completed their highest level of qualification.



## ACCREDITATION

79% of all respondents possessed a qualification and NZPI accreditation, a slight increase in previous year's result, a further 18% held accreditation from other planning institutes, whilst 3% of respondents reported possessing no planning accreditation.



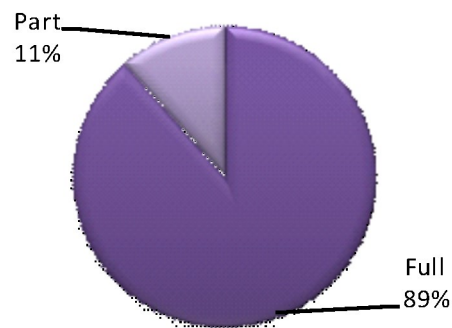




# EMPLOYMENT

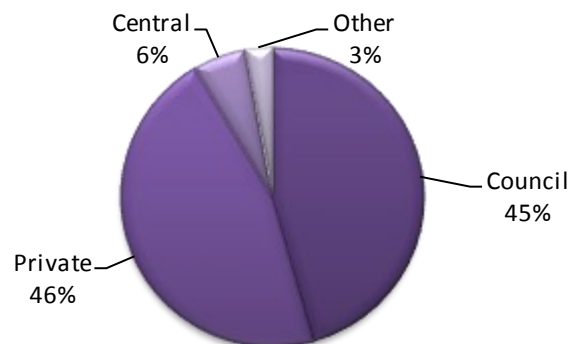
## FULL OR PART TIME EMPLOYMENT

Just 11% of respondents reported part time employment status. This result reflects a decrease of 1% in part time employment status from previous survey results.



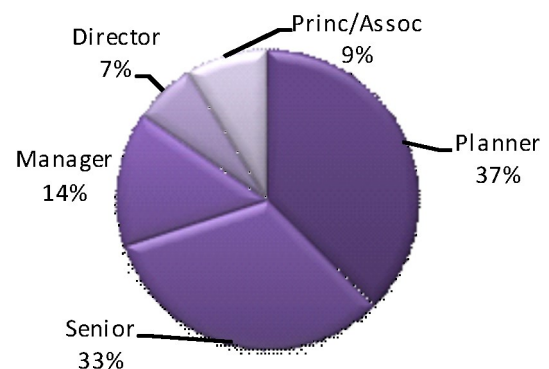
## ORGANISATIONS IN WHICH PLANNERS WORK

45% of respondents worked within a unitary authority, or regional or local council. A further 46% work within the private sector. A further 6% of respondents worked within central government whilst 3% of respondents worked within not for profits, universities or other organisations.



## THE ROLE OF PLANNERS

70% of respondents were acting in a planner's role as opposed to a management role. This represents a decrease of 3% in comparison with last year's salary survey results.



# RECRUITMENT AND REPORTS

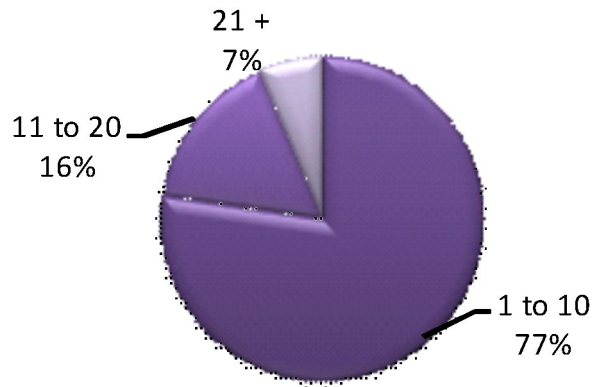
## RECRUITING STAFF

73% of respondents responsible for recruiting staff in 2014 experienced no difficulties in filling vacancies. 27% of respondents responsible for recruitment found vacancies difficult to fill. These responses represent an increase from 2013 results of 5% for those experiencing difficulties in filling vacancies.

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## STAFF REPORTING NUMBERS

Of those who indicated they were responsible for staff 77% held responsibility for between one to ten staff (an increase of 4% since the previous survey results). 16% reported responsibility for eleven to twenty staff. The remaining 7% of respondents were responsible for 21 + staff. There is a marked trend from previous salary survey results with planners taking on responsibility for more reports.



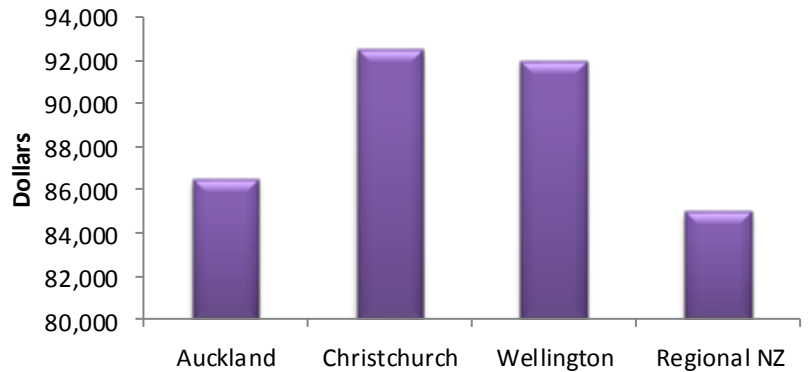


# MEDIAN SALARY

With salaries ranging from \$40,000 to \$266,000, the median annual salary of respondents who answered this question was \$87,500. This represents a \$3,500 increase in the median salary since the 2014 salary survey results.

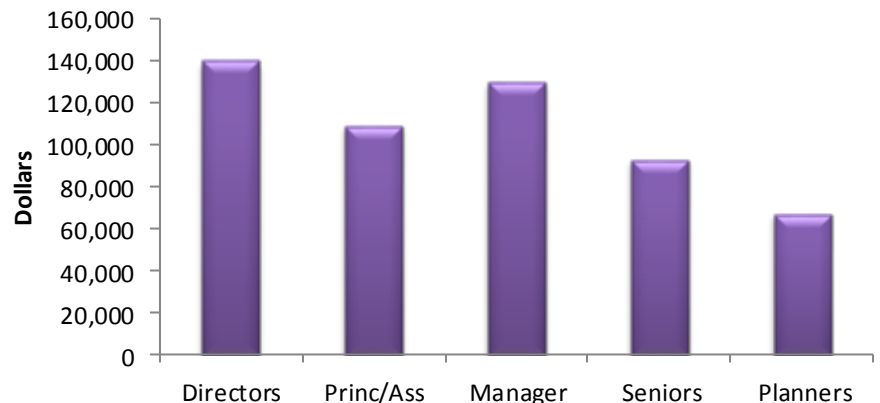
## MEDIAN SALARY BY LOCATION

The highest median salary was reported by planners working within the Christchurch region with a median of \$92,500 (down from \$95,000 in 2013). Planners within the Wellington region reported a median of \$92,000 (down from \$94,250 in 2013). Planners within the Auckland region reported a median of \$86,500 (up from \$83,000 in 2013). Planners working outside of the three centres reported a median of \$85,000 (an increase of \$4,500 from 2013 survey results).



## MEDIAN SALARY BY JOB CATEGORY

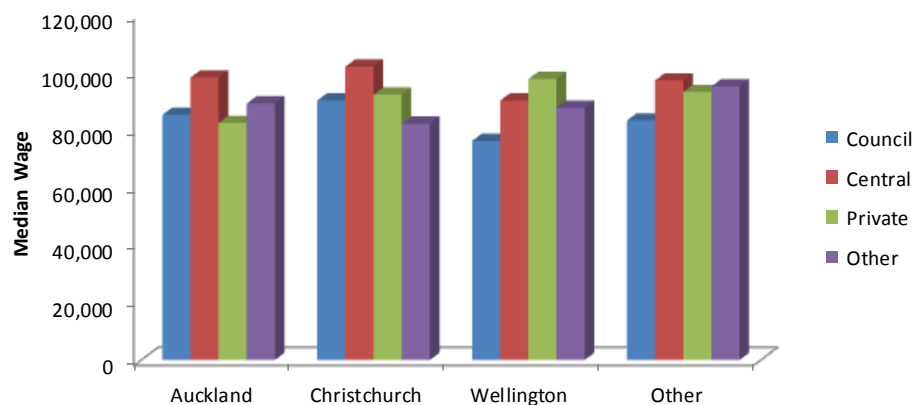
The highest median salary was reported by Directors at \$140,000 (a decrease of over \$10,750 from the previous year's survey) with the second highest median salary reported by Managers at \$130,000 (an increase of \$7,000 from the 2013 survey).



The median salary reported by senior planners and planners was \$93,000 (up \$2,000 from the previous survey) and \$67,000 respectively (down \$2,000 from the previous year's survey), whilst Principals and Associates attracted a median salary of \$109,000 (an increase of \$3,000 from the previous year's survey).

## MEDIAN SALARY BY LOCATION AND ORGANISATION

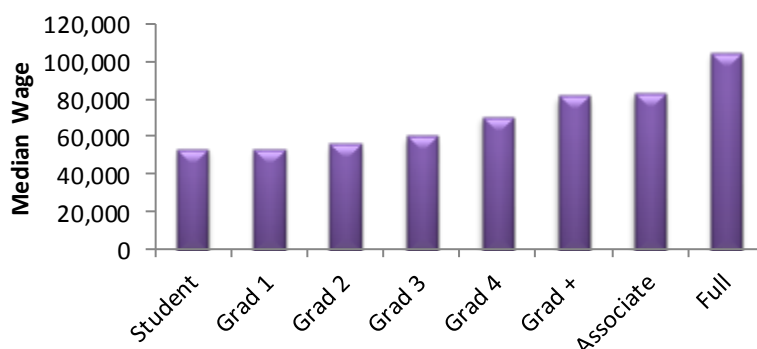
Respondents from Christchurch within Category 3 organisations reported the highest median salary of \$101,750. The lowest median salary of \$76,000 was reported by respondents in the Wellington region working within Category 2 organisations.



# MEDIAN SALARY

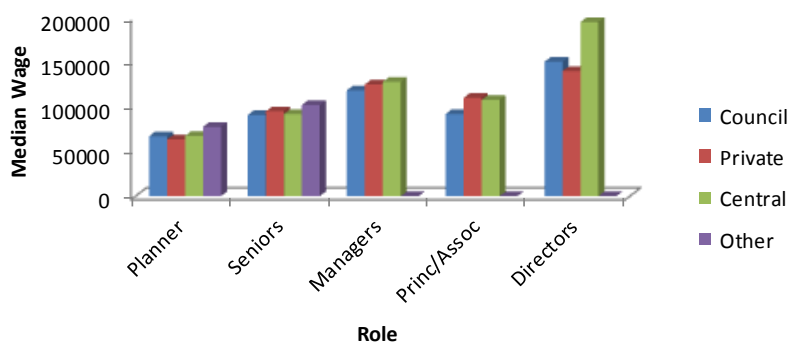
## MEDIAN SALARY BY MEMBERSHIP CATEGORY

The following graph depicts the median salary by NZPI membership category. Of note is the difference in median salary by those possessing full membership and those possessing GradPlus membership - a difference in median salary of \$22,750.



## MEDIAN SALARY BY JOB CATEGORY AND ORGANISATION

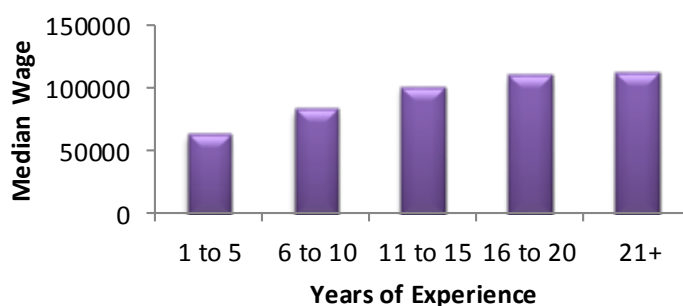
The highest median salary of \$195,000 was reported by Directors working within Central Government, followed by Directors working within the Councils who reported a median salary of \$150,350. Principal/Associate respondents reported a median wage of \$107,750 (when working within central government). Senior Planner respondents reported a median wage of \$102,000 when working within Category 4 organisations (other). Managers working within central government reported a median wage of \$128,000 whilst planners working within central government organisations reported a median salary of \$67,500.



## MEDIAN SALARY BY EXPERIENCE

Respondents possessed between one and forty seven years of experience within the planning profession. The median salary for those respondents with less than five years experience was \$ 63,000, (comparable with previous year) for those with between six and ten years it was \$83,000 (up \$3,000 from previous year).

Planners with between eleven and fifteen years of experience reported a median salary of \$101,000 (up \$3,000 from previous year) whilst those with between sixteen and twenty years experience reported a median salary of \$110,000 (down \$4,500 from previous year) Respondents with over twenty one years experience reported a median salary of \$112,500 (down \$10,000 from previous year).

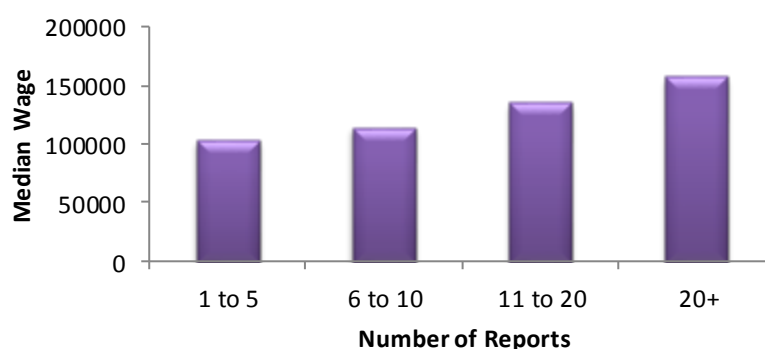


# MEDIAN SALARY



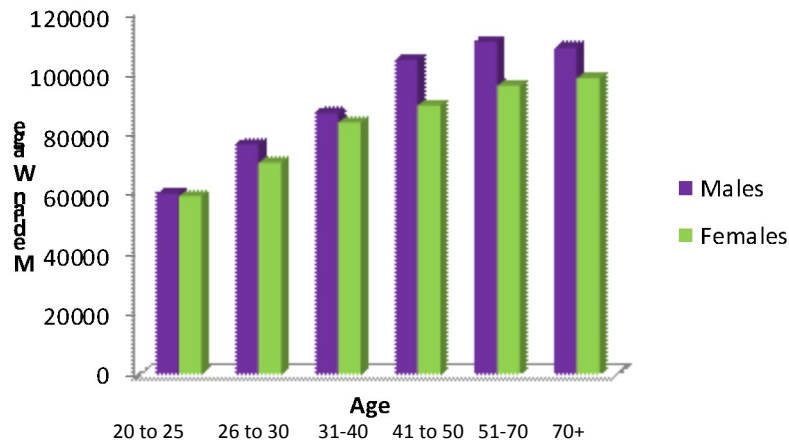
## MEDIAN SALARY BY STAFFING RESPONSIBILITY

Respondents holding responsibility for one to five staff reported a median salary of up to \$103,000 (down \$1,000 from previous year), \$114,000 for six to ten staff (down \$3,000 from previous year) \$135,000 for eleven to twenty staff (up \$12,000 from previous year) and \$170,000 for twenty staff plus (comparable with previous year).



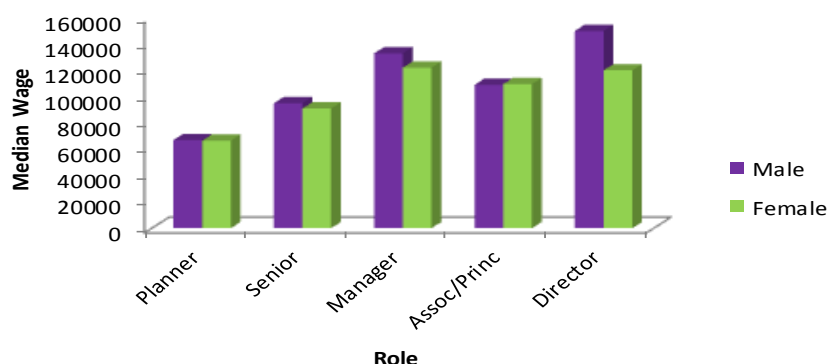
## MEDIAN SALARY BY AGE AND GENDER

Male respondents reported a higher median wage in all age categories in comparison with female respondents.



## MEDIAN SALARY BY GENDER AND JOB CATEGORY

Analysis of median salary by gender and job category represents a new statistic for the NZPI Salary Survey. The results demonstrate that the median salary for males surpasses that of females in all job categories with the exception of Associate/Principals.



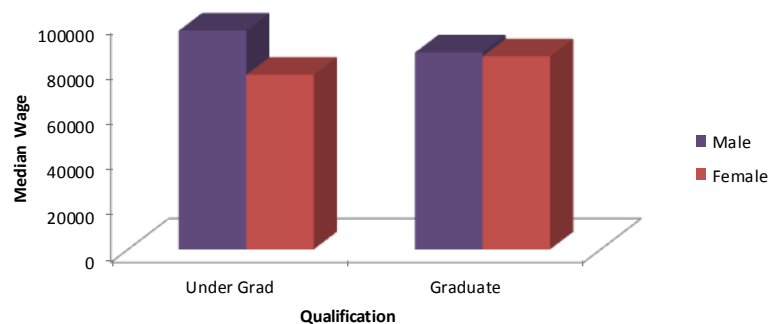


## MEDIAN SALARY

### MEDIAN SALARY BY QUALIFICATION AND GENDER

Male respondents holding either a post graduate degree /diploma reported a median salary of \$86,000 (down \$6,000 from previous year) compared with a reported \$86,000 median salary for females (up \$3,000 from previous year).

Male respondents holding an under-graduate degree reported a median salary of \$95,500 (up \$5,000 from previous year) in comparison with female respondents who reported a median salary of \$76,250 (down \$750 from previous year).



### RISE IN REMUNERATION

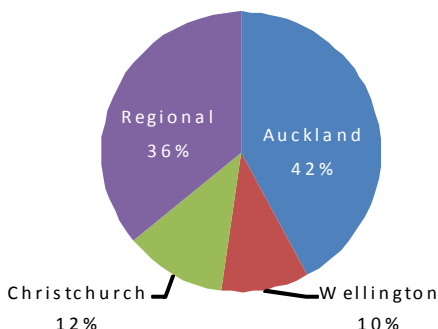
Of those that responded to this question, 111 had not received a rise in remuneration in 2014 whilst 420 had. Looking forward to 2015, 129 respondents did not anticipate a rise in remuneration in that year whilst 406 respondents did.

# YOUNG PLANNERS

## LOCATION OF YOUNG PLANNERS

For the purposes of this survey, 'Young Planners' are defined as planners with up to five years experience.

NZPI Young Planners are relatively evenly spread throughout NZ with 42% (up 1% from previous year ) of respondents based beyond the major cities of Auckland, Christchurch and Wellington.

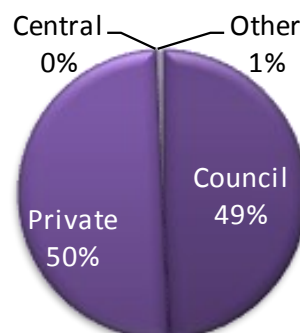


## GENDER OF YOUNG PLANNERS

66% (up by 5% from 2013 of young planner respondents were female with just 34% (down by 5% from 2014) being male.

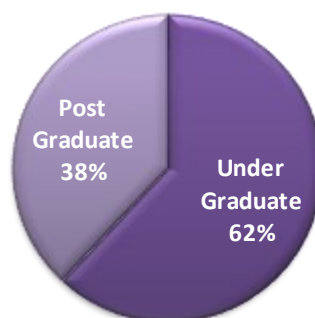
## ORGANISATIONS IN WHICH YOUNG PLANNERS WORK

49% of Young Planner respondents worked within regional or local government with a further 50% working within the private sector. This represents a significant shift from the public to the private sector from the previous year. A further 1% of Young Planner respondents worked within other organisations such as a University. No Young Planner respondents worked within central government.



## QUALIFICATIONS OF YOUNG PLANNERS

62% of respondents possessed an undergraduate degree i.e. a Bachelors Degree or less (up 6% from previous year) with a further 38% possessing a post graduate degree i.e. a PhD or Masters (down 6% from previous year).



# YOUNG PLANNERS

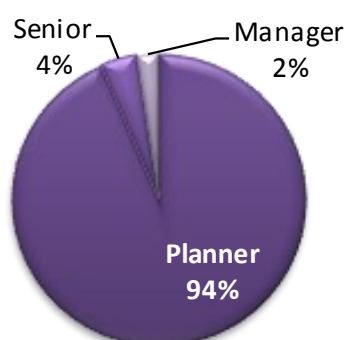
## TYPE OF QUALIFICATION

87% of all Young Planner respondents possessed a planning qualification (down 2% from previous year) whilst 13% possessed a non - planning qualification.



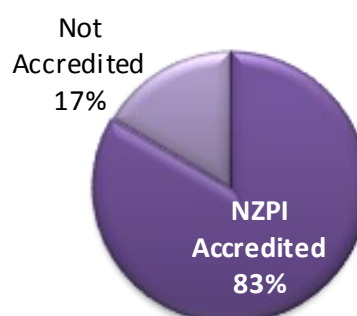
## ROLES OF YOUNG PLANNERS

94% of young planner respondents served in the role of planner, (comparable with previous year) with 2% serving as managers and a further 4% serving in senior roles.



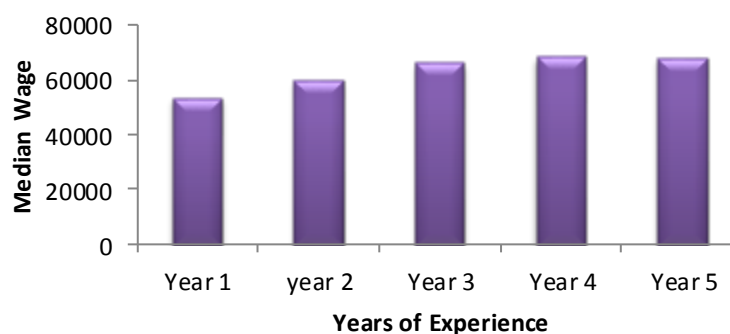
## ACCREDITATION OF YOUNG PLANNERS

83% of all Young Planner respondents possessed NZPI accreditation, (comparable with previous year), 17% were not accredited.



## MEDIAN SALARY OF YOUNG PLANNERS

The annual salary of Young Planner respondents who answered this question ranged from \$53,500 (Year 1) to \$68,000 (Year 5). The graph below reflects the change in **median** salary in the five years experience of Young Planners.

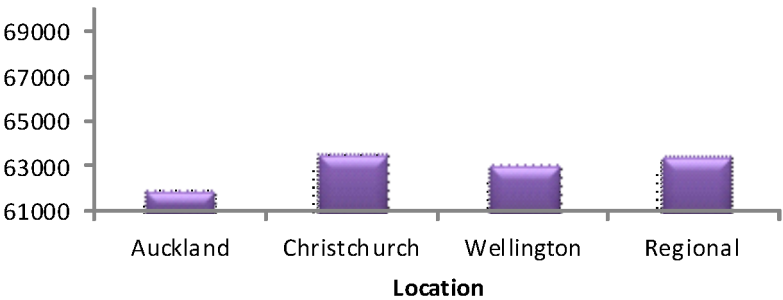




# YOUNG PLANNERS

## MEDIAN SALARY OF YOUNG PLANNERS BY LOCATION

The highest median salary was reported by Young Planner respondents working in Christchurch with a median of \$63,500. Young Planner respondents working in the Wellington region reported a median of \$63,000 and Regional respondents reported a median of \$63,400. Young Planner respondents working in the Auckland area reported a median salary of \$62,000.



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## MEDIAN SALARY OF YOUNG PLANNERS BY GENDER

The lowest median salary was reported by male respondents \$62,000. Female respondents reported a median salary of \$63,000.

# EMPLOYER CONTRIBUTIONS FOR ALL PLANNERS

## SUPERANNUATION

70% of all respondents reported receiving employer contributions towards superannuation. These contributions ranged in value between \$ 1000 and \$15,000 with a median value of \$2600.

## HEALTH AND MEDIAL INSURANCE

Just 21% of all respondents received employer contributions towards health or medical insurance. Those contributions ranged in value between \$200 and \$12,000 with a median of \$500.

## CELL PHONE

41% of all respondents reported receiving employer contributions towards cell phone costs. Those contributions ranged in value between \$40 and \$6,000 with a median value of \$500.

## HOME INTERNET/COMPUTER/SOFTWARE

27% of respondents reported receiving employer contributions towards home computer costs. These ranged in value between \$10 and \$4,800 with a median value of \$600.

## COMPANY VEHICLE

Just 11% of respondents reported having full use of a company vehicle. (down 4% from previous survey).

## RENTENTION

Respondents were asked if they had considered leaving their planning position over the past twelve months. Of the respondents who answered this question, 74% answered 'no' they had not considered that as an option, whilst 26% of respondents answered 'yes'. Recurring reasons given by respondents for wishing to leave their planning position were:

- Stress
- Desire for salary increase
- Political interference
- Desire for greater diversity of work
- Overly bureaucratic processes

# EMPLOYER CONTRIBUTIONS FOR ALL PLANNERS

## CONFERENCE ATTENDANCE

69% of all respondents reported receiving employer contributions to conference attendance. These ranged in value between \$ 20,000 and \$50. The median contribution for all those who received a contribution to conference attendance was \$441.00.

## PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

94% of all respondents reported receiving employer contributions towards professional development. These ranged in value between \$200 and \$12,000 with a median of \$400.

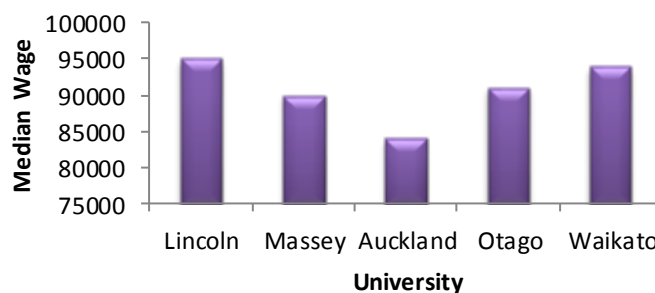
## NZPI FEES

93% of all respondents reported that their employer paid for their NZPI subscription. No change from previous salary survey result.

# UNIVERSITY QUALIFICATION AND EMPLOYMENT

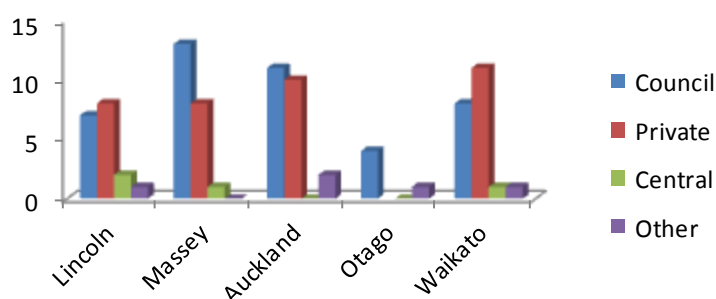
## MEDIAN SALARY BY UNIVERSITY ATTENDED - PLANNING DEGREE ONLY

The following graph represents the median salary reported by planning graduates from the five accredited Universities within New Zealand that offer planning degrees. Median Salary ranged from \$84,000 at the University of Auckland to \$95,000 at Lincoln University.



## TYPE OF EMPLOYER BY UNIVERSITY ATTENDED - PLANNING DEGREE ONLY

The following graph represents the type of organisation in which graduates with planning related degrees were currently employed.



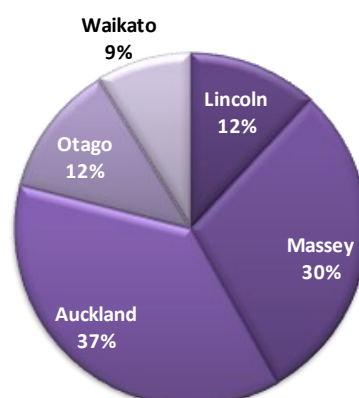
# UNIVERSITY ATTENDED

## A NEW INITIATIVE

NZPI has introduced a new component to the annual Salary Survey. Respondents were invited to identify the university at which they achieved their highest degree. Those responses have been collated to reflect respondents post university employment experience vis a vis salary, location of work and type of organisation.

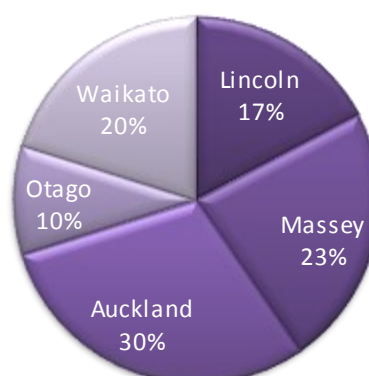
## UNIVERSITY AT WHICH HIGHEST PLANNING DEGREE (AS OPPOSED TO NON PLANNING DEGREE ) WAS ACHIEVED

Of those respondents who indicated they held a New Zealand based planning degree 37% had achieved their highest degree at University of Auckland, (down 3% from previous survey) 30% at Massey University (down 2% from previous year) 12% at the University of Otago (down 3% from previous year), 12% at Lincoln University and 9% at Waikato University, both of which reflect an increase in the results of the previous survey.



## UNIVERSITY AT WHICH HIGHEST NON PLANNING DEGREE WAS ACHIEVED

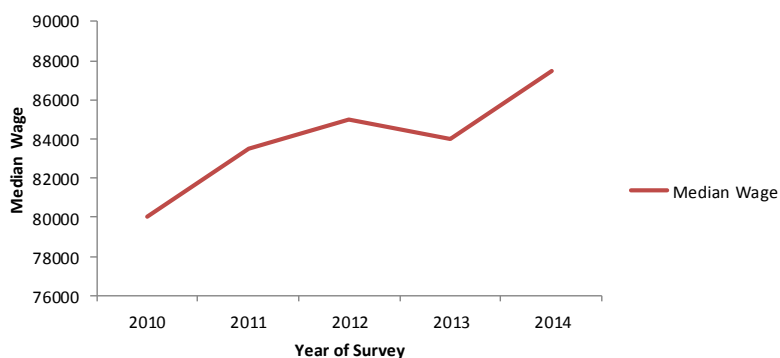
Of those who respondents who indicated they held a New Zealand based non-planning degree 30% had achieved their highest degree at University of Auckland, 20% at Waikato University, 17% at Lincoln University, 10% at University of Otago and 23% at Massey University.



# TRENDS IN THE NZPI SALARY SURVEY

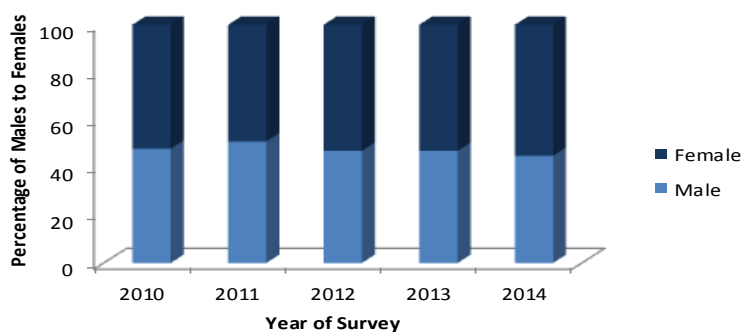
## MEDIAN SALARY

The median salary for those who responded to the NZPI surveys 2010-2014 rose from \$80,000 to \$87,500.



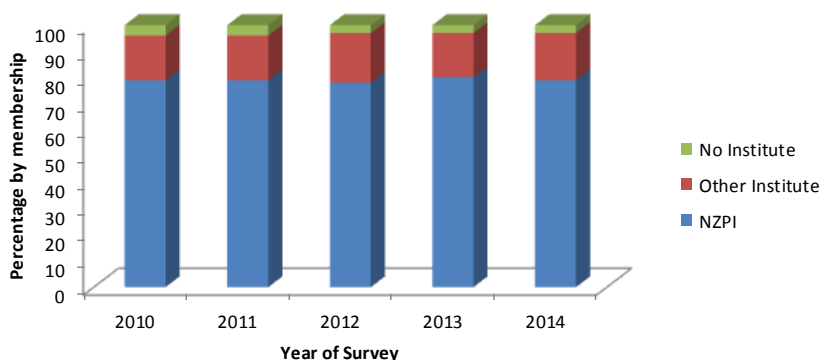
## GENDER OF PLANNERS

The surveys demonstrate a slight increase in female participation rising from 52% in 2010 to 55% in 2014.



## INSTITUTE MEMBERSHIP

The surveys demonstrate little change in the Institute of choice for planners over the past five years with membership of NZPI ranging from 79% of all respondents in 2010 to 80% in 2013.

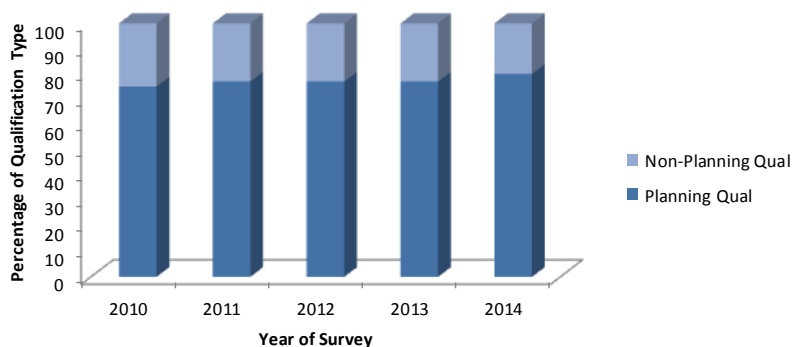




# TRENDS IN THE NZPI SALARY SURVEY

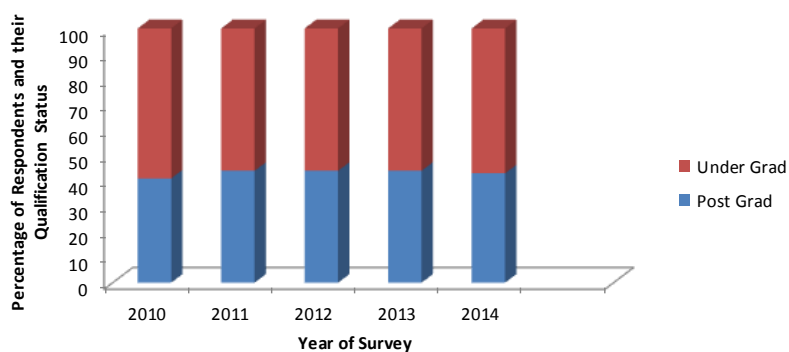
## QUALIFICATIONS OF PLANNERS

The surveys 2010-2014 reflect a slight increase in the percentage of respondents holding planning qualifications as opposed to non-planning qualifications.



## LEVEL OF QUALIFICATION

The surveys demonstrate a slight increase in the percentage of respondents holding under graduate degrees in comparison with those holding post-graduate degrees between 2010 and 2014.



## RECRUITMENT DIFFICULTY

Difficulty in recruiting staff  
Respondents reported an increasing difficulty in recruiting staff over the 2010-2014 period.

