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PRINCIPAL ENVIRONMENTAL
PLANNER | SINCLAIR KNIGHT
MERZ/ JACOBS

Joined the Institute in 1988

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Environment Institute
of Australia and
New Zealand Inc.

What prompted you to join EIANZ?

The multi-disciplinary approach that mirrored perfectly lessons learnt during my Masters of Environmental Planning degree that I undertook at Macquarie University in the mid/late 80s.

What have you found most rewarding about a career in the environment sector?

My specialisation in EIA project management, and my training in civil engineering (undergraduate) and environmental planning (post-graduate), enabled me to work constructively with clients in formulating development proposals that respected environmental, social and economic constraints and that were generally consistent with moving towards a more sustainable future.

What is the biggest change that you have seen in the environment profession over the years?

The environment has moved from being a fringe issue to a much more central consideration in the development planning process. There also has been a massive increase in sophistication of impact and risk assessment techniques since the 80s.

What are some of the most important lessons you have learned (so far) over the course of your career?

The importance of early stakeholder and community consultation remains key to a successful planning process. Unfortunately, there has been an increasing tendency to view the EIA process as essentially an approvals mechanism

rather than the means to formulate and refine a development proposal, in consultation with stakeholders and interested members of the community. This approach has usually led to conflict with affected communities and resultant delays to significant projects.

What do you see as EIANZ's key role in the environment sector?

EIANZ continues to have an important role in fostering multi-disciplinary approaches by its members and advocating sustainable policy measures to all levels of government.

What advice would you give a colleague thinking of joining EIANZ?

Go for it, and get involved!

Celebrating
30
years
1987 - 2017