Good planning is largely dependent on research and a, possibly the, key measure of the success of a university and of an academic in New Zealand is the ability to produce research outputs. Every six years the Government of New Zealand measures the performance of each university academic staff member, primarily on the basis of their research outputs, then uses this to fund universities. This is the Performance Based Research Funding system. Although individual staff ratings are not made public the performance of universities in particular areas are published. That is how Lincoln University can claim to be the top-ranked university in Architecture, Design and Planning. So next time you think your lecturer is lucky having to spend so little time teaching in classes, think again – they, and their Post Graduate students, are probably working into the wee hours doing the research on which they base their lectures, gain external research funding and add to the knowledge of society. It is up to professional planners to apply the research to address planning issues.

Unfortunately, members of the planning profession often do not have time to keep abreast of staff research. Consequently, starting in this issue, LPR will each year bring you a list of staff publications that we think are relevant to planners. Planning, especially environmental planning, is so broad that choosing what is relevant to it is difficult. Researchers also publish a wide range of material, from book reviews to books. The following list is the compilers personal selection. In deciding what to include we restricted the staff covered to those in the Faculty of Environment, Society and Design and the publications to those published in 2009. We include articles that were on research undertaken on overseas issues because these are of interest to our international readers, including overseas alumni planners, and enable us to bring learning from overseas back to New Zealand. Book reviews and articles that are of an extremely technical nature (e.g., on marine hydrography computer GIS) have been omitted, but some short newsletter style articles/discussion on topical planning issues have been retained. Newspaper opinion pieces have been excluded.

Lincoln's strength lies in its multidisciplinary approach, and its graduates have particular policy planning strengths in environmental and resource management, transportation, landscape planning, recreation, tourism and parks. These are well reflected in the publications list, and that many are co-authored with students is indicative of a positive collegial approach to research. Perhaps the international academic highlight this year, however, is Ton Buhrs’s new book on collaborative governance, which is beautifully counterbalanced by an exemplar of collaborative applied research, on Lake Ellesmere/Te Waihora, edited by Ken Hughey and his ECAn co-author. Rather than list the publications in categories, we have chosen a simple alphabetical ordering of the authors. Enjoy!

Staff Planning-relevant Research Publications in 2009
Compiled by Hamish G. Rennie and Felicity Boyd (with assistance from Jane Swift)


