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**Planner is young professional of the year**

NSW's leading young public sector professional of the year has been named as Sarah McGirr, a planning officer with the NSW Department of Planning.

The prestigious NSW Young Professional of the Year Award from the Institute of Public Administration Australia NSW Division (IPAA NSW) was announced at an awards ceremony on Friday 26 March at Sydney Convention Centre, Darling Harbour.

This IPAA NSW award provides an opportunity to acknowledge, recognise and support young individuals who have made outstanding contributions to their government agency, the public sector and the community.

Sarah, team leader in the Policy, Planning Systems and Reform branch of the Department, was judged to be the best young professional in the whole NSW public sector.

In particular the award highlighted her suite of initiatives that have delivered innovation in the NSW planning system across a range of policy areas including:

- Climate change and natural resource management;
- Infrastructure, mining and primary industries policies; and
- Planning reforms and political donations.

According to the IPAA’s award judges, Sarah displayed the ability to effectively analyse issues and research, consult, develop and implement public policy, distinguishing her as the IPAA NSW's leading young professional.

Department of Planning Director-General Sam Haddad said, “I congratulate Sarah on her win. The Department is very proud of her and pleased that her good work has been honoured by the IPAA.

“Sarah’s achievement also gives important public recognition to the diversity and quality of work being carried out each and every day by the Department’s young professionals.”

Sarah’s success with the IPAA award follows the Department’s success in winning the NSW Premier’s Priority Public Service award in 2009 for development and delivery of the Infrastructure State Environment Planning Policy.

**Media contact:** Victoria Walker 02 9228 6213