

# building today

THE OFFICIAL MAGAZINE OF THE REGISTERED MASTER BUILDERS FEDERATION



**RMBs give generously at Conference**

**RMBF president Ashley Hartley: Is politics about to kill Builder Practitioner Licensing?**

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# building today

The Taranaki Registered Master Builders Association pulled out all the stops in its hosting of the RMBF Conference 2007 in New Plymouth last month.

A record number of delegates and partners attended an informative and fun-filled three sun-drenched days networking and gaining valuable insight into important and topical industry issues — as well as raising a stunning \$38,000+ for local cancer charity organisation House for Karen.

The main news that came out of the conference — and which has spread major concern throughout the RMBF — was Building and Construction Minister Clayton Cosgrove's "cat-among-the-pigeons" address on builder licensing and the part the Government expects DIY to play in upcoming legislation.

Expect fireworks in the coming months over this important issue.

**Andrew Darlington**  
Editor



*Taranaki RMBA president David Fabish (left) is invested onto the RMBF Board of Directors by RMBF president Ashley Hartley.*

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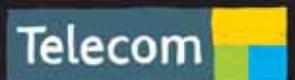
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# chief's chat

by ceo pieter burghout

## Weakening the foundations of licensing

**T**he key policy theme running through this issue of *Building Today* is the recent announcement by Building and Construction Minister Clayton Cosgrove at our recent RMBF Conference that he wants to further broaden the DIY licensing exemption that was initially agreed last year.

There's not too many topics that builders get really heated up about but, undoubtedly, the proposals floated by the Minister have got the back up of every builder that's talked to me about it!

The Minister is running the extreme risk of jeopardising the integrity of the whole licensing regime with where he seems to be headed, and we have to hope that common sense prevails and we get back onto a policy framework that underpins quality within the industry rather than undermines it.

I can still think back very clearly to the headlines in the *New Zealand Herald*, the multiple-page spreads and the categorical reform statements from the Prime Minister as a result of the leaky buildings crisis in the early 2000s.

I think back to the Hunn Report in 2002 and the information and recommendations that report put forward; and I think back to the passing of the Building Act 2004 that requires, quite categorically, that work on the structural integrity and envelope (weathertightness) of buildings would need to be done or supervised by a Licensed Building Practitioner.

When Clayton Cosgrove became Minister in late 2005, there were some discussions then about whether some DIY tolerances should be allowed for, and at our 2006 RMBF Conference in Queenstown the Minister launched details of the licensing scheme on the one hand and released some proposals that had been



agreed around limited DIY exemptions which, while not perfect, are a reasonable compromise.

It has come as a total surprise, therefore — as well as a huge disappointment — that we have had further broadening of the exemptions proposed by the Minister in recent weeks.

The suggestion is that DIYers should be allowed to build more simpler category 1 homes as long as it's

**There is the strongest of bottom lines underpinning our input. We can't have a licensing scheme that's been sabotaged from the outset by allowing rogue builders to carry on doing what they do and masquerade as DIYers.**

more heavily inspected by local authorities (what increased risk does that expose them to?) and having that recorded on the Land Information Memorandum.

Undoubtedly, we will create two classes of houses in New Zealand — those with the LIM tag and those without, and it would seem absurd that Government policy would allow that sort of befuddle to happen.

The RMBF is not against true blue DIYers doing "their thing" with their houses — they should be able to remodel the bathroom, redo the kitchen, add a low

level deck without any worries at all.

But, just like we don't allow DIYers to connect their own home wiring to the mains, just like we don't let DIYers connect their pipes to the sewage system, DIYers should be supervised by a Licensed Building Practitioner when it comes to structural work and work on the building envelope, both of which are integral to weathertightness. It's as simple as that.

This is about building quality, it is about consumer protection and it is about ensuring we have an industry that aspires to higher levels of professionalism.

The way the Minister has been floating things the past few weeks, all the rogue builders who can't get their licences (or who can't be bothered to get them) will become the dodgy DIYers of the future.

This will leave councils to pick up even more of the pieces than they currently do, and catch out home owners who don't realise their house has been built by a licence dodger.

All the good builders will get licensed, while the others will stay just as they are — and in reality we will have achieved nothing.

We set out four years ago to work with the

Government on the development of a licensing regime that would drive quality within the industry, that would be practicable and that would be based on common sense. Where we seem to be heading makes a nonsense of all that hard work, and that is both deeply disappointing and frustrating.

We also know that this issue has raised the ire of a large number of colleague organisations as well, and we will want to work with them to ensure we get the right outcome.

We have been invited by the Minister to meet and work with the Department of Building and Housing to see if we can come up with a workable solution and we are working with other organisations to do so.

We certainly want to engage in that process, but there is the strongest of bottom lines underpinning our input. We can't have a licensing scheme that's been sabotaged from the outset by allowing rogue builders to carry on doing what they do and masquerade as DIYers.

Licensing is meant to be a key quality foundation for the industry, and it remains absolutely critical we get it right for the future of our industry.

# DIYers — what the Minister said . . .

**B**uilding and Construction Minister Clayton Cosgrove gave the opening address for the 2007 Registered Master Builders Conference in New Plymouth last month.

He covered a number of topics relating to the industry, including an overview of the sector, improving capability, energy efficiency, Building Consent Authority accreditation, the Building Code review and, perhaps more controversially, the Licensed Building Practitioner (LBP) scheme and how it relates to DIYers.

Almost a year ago to the day, the Minister announced the proposed LBP scheme at the RMBF conference in Queenstown. Since then a number of key stakeholders within the sector, including the RMBF, have been working together with the Government to determine the criteria that would differentiate a LBP from a DIYer.

The thinking to date has been that a DIYer should still be able to remodel internal aspects of their homes and undertake low level external work, for example decking, but that supervision be required by a LBP when it comes to structural work and any work on the building envelope.

In recent months, and in this latest address, the Minister has indicated a broadening of the exemptions, stating that "we (the Government) have absolutely no intention of undermining the Kiwi DIY tradition of having a go. I have given the public a commitment that DIY will be protected and I will honour that commitment".



*Building and Construction Minister Clayton Cosgrove*

He acknowledged that the question of DIY construction does raise some issues that could undermine the licensing regime by allowing unlicensed builders to remain in the industry.

Consequently, this would mean no quality control accountability through the Licensing Board and, therefore, little protection for the consumer buying the house.

In response to this, he stated that an option would be for "DIY work to result in the placement of a notice on the LIM showing that an amateur did the construction work".

This would give the consumer the choice to seek further pre-purchase inspections or "walk away and buy the other house built down the street built by a LBP".

Regarding "defining exactly how far a DIY building can go", the Minister felt the reality is that only straightforward projects are generally tackled by DIYers, and that "anyone should be able to build a traditional house, bach or sleep-out". Beyond this, more complex construction would require a LBP.

The Minister reiterated that the Government is committed to the licensing scheme and believes that these options will both improve and strike the right balance for this scheme.

He felt that, over time, it will raise skill levels within the sector and "promote, recognise and support professional skills".

## So where to from here?

**A**t its simplest, the RMBF and an increasing number of similar organisations and stakeholders have the view that the DIY issue risks undermining the integrity of the whole licensing regime if it is not handled properly.

The Minister has asked that the RMBF works with the Department of Building and Housing to develop a

suitable framework for DIY, and the RMBF is certainly honour bound to work through that process.

The RMBF also has to be prepared for the possibility that the Minister's expectations around this are significantly different from the industry. This will mean a different and stepped up level of advocacy work to ensure the RMBF gets the outcome that it knows is

right for the industry and best for the consumer.

Without a doubt, this is the biggest issue on the RMBF's agenda. If the licensing framework is not right then, from the RMBF's perspective, it calls into question the whole Building Act reform process, and the Federation will have to consider at that point how it shifts the debate to the next level.

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# Is Politics about to **kill** Builder Practitioner Licensing?

By RMBF president  
Ashley Hartley

**B**efore I launch into the hot topic of licensing, I must say there are things from our past that are great. One of those is taking the Registered Master Builders Federation annual conference to the provinces.

Taranaki, you did us all proud, not only by providing blue sky for three days, but also by producing an extremely well organised and run event. Thank you on behalf of all the 420+ attendees.

Our 107th conference will be one to remember, not only for the highs, such as the quality of speakers, social events and workshops, but also for the lows that appear to have popped over the horizon, if we take the speeches from the politicians seriously.

After listening to speeches from both Labour's Minister for Building and Construction Clayton Cosgrove and National's Nick Smith, there is no doubt in my mind that Builder Practitioner Licensing is about to, or has become, a political football game with no referee.

We thank them both, along with Bob Clarkson, for attending and being open and frank with us, but we're not impressed with some of the messages that were delivered to the delegates at the conference.

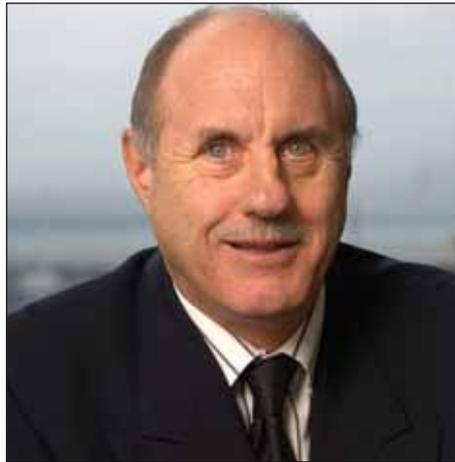
At our 2006 conference in Queenstown the Labour Government announced a staged implementation for Builder Practitioner Licensing.

This was part of their policy to implement actions recommended by the 2002 Hunn Report that had looked into the systemic failure within the building industry that we now know well as the "leaky buildings crisis".

At that time we at the RMBF considered they had gone too far with what work could be carried out by the DIY sector, but we accepted it as being inevitable and a reasonable compromise.

In November 2006, the industry made a clear statement to the Department of Building and Housing and the Government that if licensing was to work, for industry and the consumer, it had to be a comprehensive system.

One year on we are being informed that the model we have been working extremely hard towards is to be watered down to the point of it being meaningless.



The current line of thinking by Government risks undermining:

- the whole reform package,
- consumer confidence,
- the overall quality approach and reinforcing the need for skills, and
- the rebuild of apprenticeships.

We heard from the Australians at the conference that the "owner-build" exemption in Victoria increased building quality issues dramatically, and that they are now trying to "fix" this problem.

We surely should be able to learn from other countries and their mistakes, and if allowing too much DIY hasn't worked for the industry in Australia, why are we looking to go down the same path here in New Zealand?

In New Zealand we will see that the "good builders" will go through the hassle of becoming licensed, while all the rogue builders will flood the category 1 market (category 1 buildings being those that are masonry or timber-framed houses with low-risk designs).

We all know that building processes are much more regulated, complicated and complex following the leaky buildings saga, and to think a DIYer can fully understand these complexities and possibly build houses up to a score of 12 on the E2/AS1 Risk Matrix is beyond me.

We are told DIY is a Kiwi culture thing and the Government does not want to be responsible for undermining it. We're not against DIY either — and Kiwi DIYers should be able to do the things they normally do, such as renovate the bathroom, repaint the interior or replace a window.

But when it comes to structural work and work affecting the building envelope, that's when a professional licensed building practitioner should be involved — either by doing the work or by helping oversee it.

If category 1 becomes the predominant domain of non-licensed builders we can expect more quality problems in the future.

What incentive is there for a DIYer to go to a trade demonstration and learn about a product he/she may only use once? Or keep updated with Standards and legislative changes?

Inevitably, the consumer will think this "builder" knows it all, and will be highly aggrieved if and when something goes wrong and they find out otherwise.

On the other hand, if builders have a license they have to get renewed annually or biannually, or could lose through the disciplinary process, then there is a big incentive to keep their knowledge base and skill level up to date on a regular basis.

The DIY proposals as announced last year do not stop DIY — they just require that a DIYer gets some oversight and supervision at critical points of the building process. This made sense to us at the RMBF last year and continues to make sense to us today.

Since the Minister's announcement a year ago, the RMBF has been staunch in communicating the direction we think licensing should go to best benefit builders and consumers.

In doing so we have been accused of protecting our patch, for which I make no apology. The RMBF very much stands for "building excellence", and we will continue to advocate for a regulatory framework which lifts quality levels right across the industry.

Quality is not only something we aspire to, but it's also very much what consumers demand.

It is up to the Government to take the lead and introduce, in full, the Building Practitioner Licensing scheme that we have all been working towards over the past three to four years to ensure quality across the board.

Come on Minister Cosgrove, you need to have the resolve (for which you will have our support), and make what we see as the obvious and sensible decisions.

While for some they might be seen as the hard decisions to make, in reality it's what the industry and consumers want.

# 'Watered down' builder licensing – an independent view

Email to Building and Construction Minister Clayton Cosgrove from  
Christchurch Registered Master Builder Andrew Wallace.

*Dear Mr Cosgrove*

*Having attended the recent Registered Master Builders Conference 2007 and listened to your address there, I am compelled to write to you with my reaction to the path that New Zealand builder licensing is obviously taking.*

*One particular area that yourself and the Department of Housing really seem to be wavering upon is the decision allowing DIY persons to be undertaking construction of residential dwellings.*

*Having owned and operated a residential building company now for 14 years, I feel that to be even considering allowing non-professional and non-licensed owners/builders/DIYers, whatever they may be called, to undertake construction of modern, complex and often specialised residential dwellings is simply a huge mistake if Kiwis want a world-class residential construction industry.*

*My understanding is that the Australian state of New South Wales has allowed home owners to undertake their own house construction once every three years. The non-licensed builders have masqueraded as owner DIY builders and are producing inferior and shoddy houses, therefore continuing to undermine professionalism and the public's trust of the residential building industry in that state.*

*The path I feel that will serve New Zealand home owners and the New Zealand residential building industry best is very simple. If a building project requires a building consent then it must be built by a licensed builder.*

*This form of registration/licensing requirement has been working very well for electricians, drainlayers, plumbers and gas fitters for many years.*

*The outstanding irony is that as a presently "non-licensed" builder and site/project manager, I am co-ordinating and instructing these "self-regulated registered" trades every day of the week!*

*Yet when your government deems Kiwi builders are to be licensed you choose to ignore the existing regulation systems of other trades that are working very well and that could be a basis for builder licensing.*

*You have chosen instead to form a new bureaucratic government department consisting of some 300-plus staff, of whom I understand less than 12% come from a building industry-related background!*

*Listening to your statements gave me an insight into just why, over the past three years, my company has had six building project start dates delayed due to Resource Management Act and building consent problems — all of which you claimed to be aware of.*

*However, you did not provide any concise solutions for improvement in your address.*

*Delays of four to five months for building consents are still occurring in your very own constituency of Waimakariri. I have just been informed by a client that his consent lodged in late October 2006 for a new dwelling has finally been issued last week.*

*However, my company simply could not wait any longer and, earlier this year due to incurring more down time, I was forced to "scramble" and find alternative work.*

*This is an all too familiar scenario for many builders I speak to with today's bureaucratic consent processing.*

*As employers and business owners we are expected to pay our GST, PAYE, provisional and terminal taxes on time. However, a building consent that, under the building act, is required to be issued in 20 working days can, depending upon the territorial authority, take up to six months.*

*One of the present buzz words is "home affordability". Have you, as the Minister of Building and Construction, thought of how the delays with building bureaucracy contribute greatly to increased costs?*

*New Zealand is one of the last western countries to undertake licensing of its builders. Surely we should be looking to see what works and what doesn't for other nations then head down an intelligent and informed path to the creation of a world-class residential building industry.*

*As Minister you claimed you are not wanting builder licensing to become a political football as the New Zealand voter deserves better, post "leaky homes".*

*Mr Cosgrove, you have already made builder licensing political because it seems to me you are intent upon having a "dollar each way" by attempting to appease both Kiwi builders and the DIY voter as well.*

*Let's be real, "DIY voter" describes probably around one million plus Kiwi voters! Kiwis it seems are now getting "watered down" builder licensing.*

*About as good as "watered down" concrete when a strong foundation is required.*

*Yours Sincerely  
Andrew Wallace*

Next month: Look out for more  
Conference coverage in Building Today

# Taranaki turns it on for

*The Taranaki Registered Master Builders Association ensured all delegates, guests and partners had a wonderful time in New Plymouth, hosting three days of fun and networking, along with a superb line-up of speakers — not to mention the Building and Construction Minister and Shadow Ministers from both sides of the political arena.*

*Building Today was there to capture the action . .*

*Right: 2007 RMBF Board members, from left: Dave Fabish, Anthony Leighs, Pieter Burghout, Brent Mettrick, Blair Cranston, Ashley Hartley, Kevin Stanley, Michael Fox and Richard Carver.*



# Conference 2007!



## RMBs give generously to House for Karen

Registered Master Builders from around the country united together and raised a record amount for their chosen charity, New Plymouth's very worthy House for Karen, at the conference charity auction in New Plymouth over the conference weekend.

The auction, held at Yarrow Stadium on April 19, raised \$38,750 thanks to the generosity of RMB members who bid on packages including a fishing trip, a signed Black Caps cricket bat and four half-hour rides in Russian Yak 52 aeroplanes.

The House for Karen is a New Plymouth community project which provides houses that are used as a retreat for families with a member suffering from terminal cancer.

House for Karen trustee Ronnie Van Dillen says he was overwhelmed with the result of the auction. He says the money raised will pay for upkeep and running of the houses, meaning families will be able to stay at no expense.

Taranaki RMBA president Dave Fabish says he was over the moon with the charity auction result, and found the generosity of RMBs and others who bid at the event extraordinary.



Above: Ronnie Van Dillen (House of Karen trustee, and Karen's husband), Ruth Bailey (House for Karen marketing officer), John Street (Taranaki RMBA executive member and Yak pilot) and Dave Fabish (Taranaki RMBA president).

Right: Southland supporters Tony Laker, Marie Clarke and Katrina Thomas from Laker House of Travel.

Below: Taranaki RMBA executive member Terry Clegg and Northland supporter Marlene Trigg help the Taranaki cheerleaders with their routine!



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# Fulfilling achievement says Apprentice of the Year winner

'Great to have my skills and **knowledge** recognised by the industry'

**A**ndrew Meiklejohn says entering and winning the Registered Master Builders Carters 2006 Apprentice of the Year competition was one of the most fulfilling things he has ever done.

Mr Meiklejohn, who was named the Southern Region's Apprentice of the Year last year, says he never thought he would win the regional title, but doing so spurred him on to keep setting personal goals and challenging himself.

"It was great to have my skills and knowledge of the trade recognised by the industry and by other apprentices. The competition really made me challenge myself to see if I had what it took to be the best at what I do," he says.

"I never thought I would win, and doing so made me realise what I am capable of," he says.

The 21-year-old attributes much of his success to employers Stewart Construction Ltd, who provided great support and advice throughout the competition.

Peter Ross of Stewart Construction Ltd says Mr Meiklejohn's commitment and natural abilities make him a great asset to the company and a role model for

other apprentices.

"We're proud that Andrew put himself out there and entered the competition. It was important for us to support him throughout and encourage him to excel in what he was doing," Mr Ross says.

"In a business sense it has also been great for us. Other people in the industry recognise that we have quality

people working for us and that we are committed to the future of the industry."

The \$2000 study grant Mr Meiklejohn won as part of his Apprentice of the Year prize package has seen him enrol in Otago Polytechnic, where he is studying the National Certificate in Construction Leading Hand and Supervision, part-time.



From left: Cocksy, Bruce Dawson (Southland RMBA president), RMBF chief executive Pieter Burghout, David Benson-Pope, Southern Region winner Andrew Meiklejohn, Rachel Winter (BCITO) and Iain Osborne (Carters regional manager).

## Skills translate to life in general

"The course has been valuable so far and has taught me a range of skills that are important on the building site, but that also translate to life in general," he says.

Due to complete his apprenticeship through the BCITO this year, Mr Meiklejohn is excited about taking the next step in his career and furthering his experience and technical skills with his current employer.

Entries in the Registered Master Builders Carters 2007 Apprentice of the Year competition are open until Tuesday, July 31. The competition is supported by principal sponsor Carters, and supporting sponsors the Building and Construction Industry Training Organisation (BCITO), Registered Master Builders Federation and the Department of Building and Housing.

Entry forms can be downloaded from [www.masterbuilder.org.nz](http://www.masterbuilder.org.nz) or [www.bcito.org.nz](http://www.bcito.org.nz), or are available at Carters stores nationwide.

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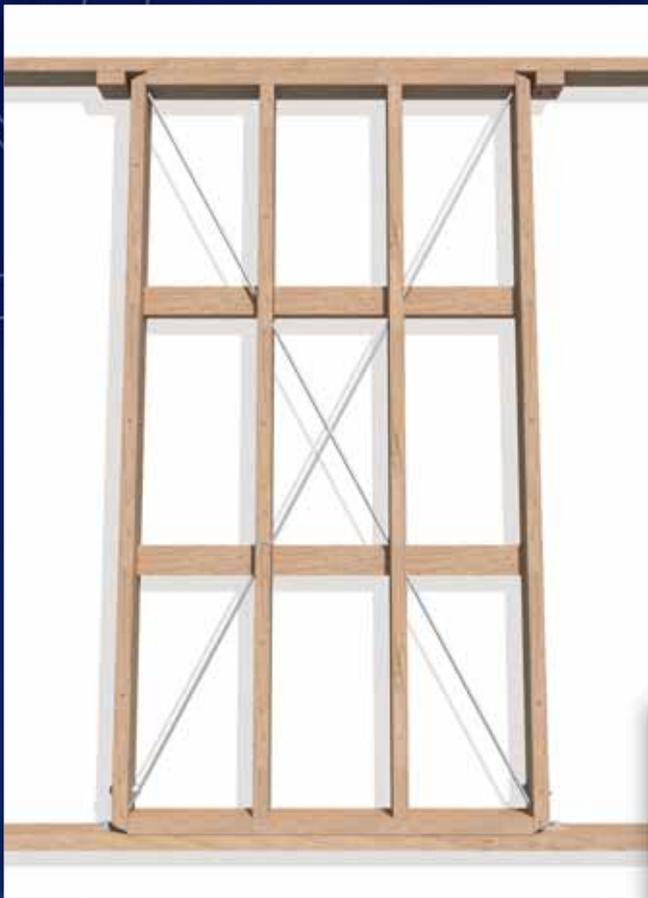
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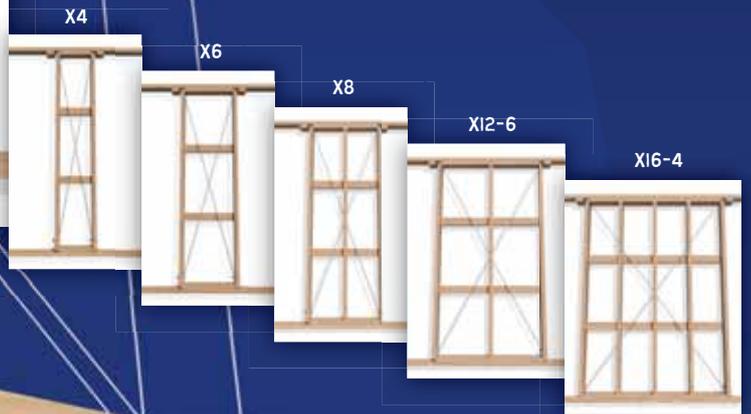


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rmbf news

## Judging begins

A team of 20 judges has been given the daunting task of assessing the 683 properties entered in this year's Registered Master Builders House of the Year and RMB Commercial Project Awards, in association with PlaceMakers.

The judging began on April 26, and will continue over the following 14 weeks as 10 panels made up of two judges (one with building expertise and one with architectural expertise) travel the country in search of the top residential and commercial properties.

Each judging panel is given a particular category to judge, and they assess every property entered in that category in the 20 Registered Master Builder regions to determine the gold, silver and bronze award-winning residential and commercial properties in each area. These award-winning properties will be announced at local awards ceremonies.

The judges were selected from applications to the competition's HoY management panel, and the organisers are delighted by the standard and breadth of experience in this year's group.

More than half have been judges before and their knowledge of the competition awards programme is greatly valued, while the five or six newcomers add a fresh perspective to the judging process.

Brian Honeybone has been a judge in the House of the Year for several years, and says he gets a great deal of satisfaction from it.

"It's my chance to give something back to the industry. It's great to set benchmarks for quality, and I really believe this competition helps lift the standard of construction in New Zealand," he says.

Mr Honeybone is joined by Keith Hay, and together they will judge 120 properties nationwide in the new homes between \$250,000 and \$350,000 category.

To keep judges fresh, this year schedules have been divided into four-day blocks. Judges may visit up to five properties per day depending on how far they have to travel between properties. This suits Mr Honeybone well as he still runs his building company, Honeybone Builders, during this time.

He has been on the other side of the judging panel too, and knows first-hand just how much effort and energy goes into building an award-winning property.

Prior to being a judge, Honeybone Builders (which this year celebrates its 50th anniversary in business) not only won awards in several local competition events but has taken a national title in the over \$1 million residential property category.

By August 1, the judging for the local competitions will be complete and the team of judges will disband for another year, knowing they have seen the best of the best in residential and commercial building in New Zealand.

From the local competition awards programmes, the top 100 properties are selected, and a new residential judging panel of two spends six weeks visiting each of these properties.

They will then determine the national winners across a total of 22 categories, including five lifestyle awards, and the two supreme winning properties — the PlaceMakers Supreme Award and the RMB Commercial Project of the Year.

The winning properties will be announced at an awards ceremony in Auckland on Saturday, October 27.

# Construction sector remains solid

The latest building consent figures indicate another month of solid, steady growth in the construction sector, according to Registered Master Builders Federation chief executive Pieter Burghout.

Statistics New Zealand reported that the value of residential building consents for March was \$711 million — 14% higher than in March 2006 — while the number of building consents for new housing units issued in March was 2269, 30 fewer than in March last year.

Taking out apartments, there were 2079 new dwelling units authorised this March, the same as in March 2006.

“The increase in the value of consents in March 2007 continues the trend we have seen in recent months where the quality end of the housing market remains strongest overall,” Mr Burghout says.

“Despite slightly fewer consents authorised in March compared to this time last year, the residential building industry continues to be positive.”

“These results validate the trends that the RMBF has been signalling for some time.”

There are also some interesting regional variations within the residential consents data, with larger increases occurring in Waikato, Bay of Plenty, Marlborough, the West Coast and Canterbury.

The largest decreases have been in Auckland and Hawke's Bay, reflecting anecdotal feedback from members in those regions, Mr Burghout says.

The commercial industry is holding strong with a 12% dollar value increase on the March 2006 figure to \$413 million.

Only seven months in the past two and a half years have seen dollar spends higher than \$400 million, so the commercial sector is very much trending strongly at this point in time, he says.

Statistics New Zealand says the major commercial increase was in office and administration buildings, while the largest decrease was education buildings.

“Overall, the construction industry continues to enjoy the general ‘steady as you go’ nature of the current environment.

“We continue to expect some softening throughout the

remainder of 2007 and early 2008, but certainly the current trends remain very positive,” Mr Burghout says.

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# Energy efficient hot water solutions that don't impact on lifestyle

## Rinnai efficiency makes it possible

Increasingly home owners are looking at their energy bill and wondering how on earth it managed to get so expensive. They are becoming more concerned about the environment and looking at ways to save energy and water.

Heating water is the largest single energy use in homes — meaning that more and more educated consumers are demanding hot water solutions in their home design that really make a difference.

In response to this, Rinnai has launched the new Rinnai Efficiency Condensing Continuous Flow Water Heater. It not only provides the lifestyle benefit of endless, tankless hot water, but is also 95% energy efficient and, as it uses gas (as opposed to electricity), has a positive impact on greenhouse gas production.

So what does this all mean? As well as easing the home owner's social conscience, a Rinnai Efficiency means lower running costs and more continuous hot water than you can imagine.

In the average household using about 500 litres a day at 45°, the new Rinnai Efficiency Condensing Continuous Flow Water Heater can effectively save the home owner nearly half the costs of using an electric tank.\*

Additional digital controllers deliver water to exactly the required temperature, for example 38° for showering. In addition, the temperature is not affected by others using hot water in the house, eliminating those painful moments in the shower! So, all that's left is to relax and enjoy.

But for the really smart, the comfort of endless hot water is now easier to install and enjoy with the new Rinnai Infinity Wireless Controller. The completely portable wireless controller offers all the functionality of an Infinity Digital Compact Controller, without the hassle of having to run cables throughout the house.

This substantially reduces installation time and eliminates the need to bring in yet another contractor.

This system couldn't be more user friendly, environmentally friendly or wallet friendly.

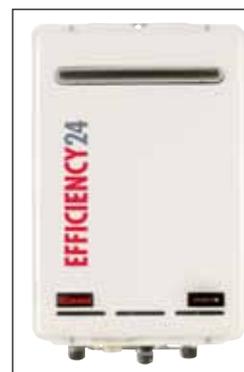
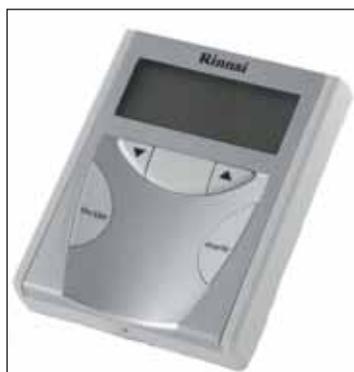
Fyfe Homes, who offer traditional family homes of the highest quality, use Rinnai, and manager Marc Denness says: "Rinnai does not compromise on quality and, equally important, they provide us with the after sales and technical support which gives us the security of knowing that if there is a problem, it will be fixed quickly and efficiently

For assistance in specifying, siting and installing the Rinnai, phone (0800) To RINNAI (0800 86 746 624) or visit Rinnai online at: [www.rinnai-tradesmart.co.nz](http://www.rinnai-tradesmart.co.nz).

\* Calculations are approximate only. Actual costs may vary depending on charges levied by your electricity or gas supplier.



The Efficiency 24 Condensing Continuous Flow Hot Water system offers endless hot water and lower running costs with 95% energy efficiency. Plus, mounted externally, they free up space inside for extra storage.



## Direct use of gas — better for the environment

Whilst electric tanks claim 100% efficiency, up to 75% of energy can be lost in creating electricity from fossil fuels. As demand for electricity increases, our reliance on these fuels has grown.

Direct use of gas as a fuel has much less wastage. In effect, 100% of the energy is delivered to the home (or business).

Adding an extremely effective and efficient appliance to this (such as the 95% efficient Rinnai Efficiency) ensures the greatest level of benefit is delivered to the end user, with the minimum impact on the environment.



## You're only as good as the installer you specify. Insist on Nuplex Contractors Federation.

Attention to detail is the difference between a great building and great big problems. Specifying Nuplex and Plaster Systems products is the first step to getting it right; the second step is specifying Nuplex Contractors Federation installers.

Registered Nuplex Contractors Federation installers are trained to correctly apply Insulclad®, Sureshield® and the other specialised waterproofing, flooring, plaster cladding and surface finishes in the Nuplex and Plaster Systems ranges. Their standards are regularly checked.

All Nuplex Contractors Federation installers carry a blue membership card that proves their registration. It's your assurance of a trained installer.



[www.nuplexfed.org.nz](http://www.nuplexfed.org.nz)  
[www.plastersystems.co.nz](http://www.plastersystems.co.nz)  
[www.nuplexconstruction.co.nz](http://www.nuplexconstruction.co.nz)

# Platform system safe as houses

By Jenny Baker

**P**eter Kamphuis invented a modular platform walkway system primarily to create a safer environment for rooftop workers, but the product has ended up offering a few other benefits too.

Mr Kamphuis, a builder and co-owner of Auckland-based Boardwalk Modular Platform Systems, says he designed the system in 2000 after recognising a need in the market.

"A roof can be a hazardous working environment for workers required to do maintenance to rooftop plant and machinery. This product provides a cost-effective solution to this challenge," he says.

"The non-skid surface on our platforms provides a safe walkway — no more slipping on wet roofing surfaces for the roof servicemen. The product is also particularly well suited to low pitch roofs.

"In past years a common practice was to erect timber



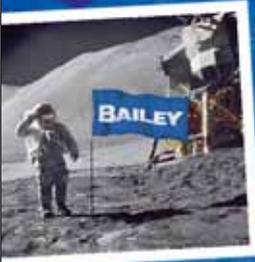
*The Boardwalk Modular Platform System as installed at Auckland International Airport.*

walkways, but we found timber can leach out chemicals that causes roofing iron to corrode quickly.

"If this happens, it could void a roofing manufacturer's

warranty. So the accompanying idea was to give the building owner some protection for their building's roof too," Mr Kamphuis explains.

*Continued page 19*



## One small step for mankind, a huge step for ladders



Patented button release system



Super strong back leg design resists twist providing greater strength and stability



Converts from stepladder to straight ladder (no catches or clips required)

### Comet Dual Purpose ladders

Forging new directions in ladder technologies, BAILEY have launched a new range of dual purpose ladders.

With stocks available in-store we invite you to come and see how Bailey ladders have become even better.

Available in 135kg Industrial and 150kg Heavy Duty Industrial models in three sizes.



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## A Revolutionary New Industry Innovation



**BoardWalk** is a Modular Platform System designed to provide safety and protection over a wide range of applications. Initially its use has been for low pitch roofing where access is required for maintenance to roof-top plant and machinery. The product is seeing increased use as temporary flooring over wet or unstable areas, and for outdoor shows and displays.



**Boardwalk Systems NZ Ltd**

Phone: 64 9 6388 278 Email: [boardwalk@clear.net.nz](mailto:boardwalk@clear.net.nz)

[www.boardwalk.co.nz](http://www.boardwalk.co.nz)

From page 18

Sold as units measuring 750mm x 1500mm in a range of colours, the system is simple to install and maintenance-free thereafter.

The lightweight modules are easily moved to the roof without mechanical assistance. The user can configure the modules in single file or at right angles using galvanised steel tubes and brackets designed to be fixed to the purlins.

This fixing system was tested to hold the Boardwalk system for wind loads up to 6kPa. The design factors that make the platforms safe also lend it durability.

"We rotary mould the platforms in medium-density polyethylene designed especially for products that require a high degree of rigidity.

"The long term UV8 stabilisation package meets the demands of our extreme UV levels and harsh climate. Consider that the same spec polyethylene has been used successfully for water tanks in New Zealand for the past 30 years," Mr Kamphuis says.

The product has a 10-year warranty from the date of first installation, provided installation was carried out by a Boardwalk-approved installer and excluding damage caused by exposure to chemicals and sharp objects.

According to Mr Kamphuis, the product's reputation as a versatile and safe walkway, the result of its portability and non-skid properties in dry and wet conditions, has spread like wildfire.

It is now also widely used as temporary flooring over wet or unstable areas, and at outdoor shows and displays.

However, as in any construction situation, an accident can happen if the end-user ignores user information.

"The platform is not designated as a bridge, and must be continuously supported underneath," Mr Kamphuis says.



The Boardwalk Modular Platform System as installed at the Sylvia Park retail development in Mt Wellington, Auckland.

# Strength, stability, safety . . .

By Jenny Baker

**F**alls from heights account for a high percentage of construction industry injuries, which is why leading ladder manufacturer Bailey, a Hills Industries company, takes extra care to ensure its products are strong, stable and safe.

In fact, product manager Chris Mayo says when the company surveys ladder users these attributes consistently rank highly when they describe their experience with Bailey ladders.

"There's a reason why we're the biggest ladder manufacturer in Australasia and the market leader," he says.

Mr Mayo acknowledges that ladders have the potential to cause accidents, but adds if the end user uses the right ladder for the job and follows safety and maintenance instructions, which Bailey includes with each purchase, it is possible to minimise this risk.

## Use the ladder wisely

"Research shows falls from ladders are most commonly the result of slipping, overreaching and using the wrong ladder for the job.

"Also, some products can be confusing to end users. For example, a 100kg load rated domestic ladder can be used only at home. An industrial rated ladder must be used on a work site — it's stronger and designed for more frequent use than a domestic ladder.

"Many accidents involving workers and domestic-rated ladders have been recorded. Ladder users must make sure they choose the right ladder for the job.

"It's also important to choose the right type of ladder. Hills Industries ladders are manufactured from timber, aluminium and fibreglass, each with its own competitive advantages.

"But a worker planning to work on electric cables, for instance,



The Comet Plus converts from a straight ladder to a stepladder with the push of a button.

should choose a non-conductive ladder for added safety," he explains.

## Safety first

The company also focuses on safety messages in its advertising campaigns and runs several safety awareness campaigns each year. Product header cards in retail stores provide end users with important ladder facts to assist them in the selection process.

Hills Industries is the only ISO9001 accredited ladder manufacturer in Australia, and all its ladders are made to AS/NZS1892.1-3 specifications.

Bailey stepladders are well known for their Punchlock trademark. "This manufacturing method of connecting the rung to the stile provides additional torsional rigidity, and is up to 70% stronger than traditionally pop-riveted stepladders," Mr Mayo says.

All designs are rigorously tested by the company's state-of-the-art, in-house testing facility where products are subjected to thousands of testing cycles, including opening and closing, dynamic drop and vibration tests.

The latter is done through transporting the ladders on the back of a truck over Australia's most infamous outback roads.

Continued page 20

# ACC tackling injuries in the construction industry

**A**mong New Zealand's working age population and ahead of all other industries, the construction industry has the highest proportion of ACC claims and costs.

For the 2005/06 period, construction accounted for 11% of all workplace entitlement (moderate to serious) claims costs, at more than \$29m.

The main types of injuries sustained in this industry are:

- soft tissue (sprain/strain) (49%),
- fracture/dislocation (14%) ,
- lacerations (11.6%),
- noise induced hearing loss (10.8 %),
- gradual process (3.8%), and
- hernia (3.4%) .

The back is the part of the body most often injured. Lifting, carrying and straining are common causes of injury, although falls, loss of balance, slips and trips also feature high on the list.

Although these claims are costly to ACC, therefore having a knock-on effect on the levy rates that builders

pay, this is not the worst news. The large proportion of these claims are serious injury, which means that person and, therefore, their families, will be greatly affected by their loss of ability, as well as the loss of income.

The cost to an employer is also increased as it means retraining or replacement of workers, and possible legal costs.

ACC has been involved in the construction sector over the past few years, along with key strategic alliances such as the Registered Master Builders Federation, Certified Builders Association of New Zealand, Site Safe New Zealand and the Department of Labour (formally OSH) to work together to try and assist the industry to reduce the injury rate.

A number of initiatives have been developed to assist and encourage, particularly small business and self-employed, the development of a simple safety management system.

Through the Workplace Safety Discount (WSD) programme, small business owners can apply for a 10% discount on their levies if they can demonstrate

an effective safety management system.

Having successfully taken part in this programme may also assist some businesses when tendering for various contracts, for example, with some local councils or principal contractors.

ACC, with the support of Site Safe and DoL, have been holding meetings around the country, some in the form of breakfast meetings or barbecues, in order to get residential construction industry workers together.

The aim is to discuss safety issues and possible fixes, as well as to receive other business-related information, such as the ACC discount programme, training programmes, employment obligations and changes to building legislation.

If you are interested in finding out more on how to obtain the discount, or if you are interested in attending a breakfast meeting in your area, please contact ACC programme manager Jennifer O'Loughlin on 09 915 8142 or 027 447 0451.

For information on WSD, you can also go to [www.acc.co.nz/wsd](http://www.acc.co.nz/wsd) or [www.sitesafe.org.nz](http://www.sitesafe.org.nz), the approved training provider for the discount programme.

## Strength, stability, safety . . .

From page 19

### Users are getting the message

Mr Mayo says a shift in ladder responsibility is becoming as evident in New Zealand as in Australia. In 2003, the Victorian Government introduced new Working at Heights legislation. This included a three-step risk management process compulsory for accessing a work site higher than two metres.

"The legislation was the catalyst for significant change in the social and corporate responsibilities of people working at heights. Workers are now well informed and empowered to look out for their own safety," he says.

Reputable New Zealand building product retailers also increasingly stock only high quality industrial ladders.

"In the six years we have focused on the Kiwi market, we have gained a significant market share and become a major player."

### Looking ahead

In 2002 Bailey introduced a range of platform

## Manage the risk

**W**orkers planning to access a work site higher than two metres with a ladder should pause a while to carry out a three-step risk management process. The steps are:

- **Identify the hazard.** For example, is the ladder stile positioned over an uneven surface, such as a muddy, water-filled hole in the soil?
- **Assess the risk arising from the hazard.** The ladder could move or unbalance and cause the worker to fall.
- **Implement control measures to eliminate or reduce the risk.** Take time out to fill in the hole and test the ladder for stability, or move the ladder to a location with an even, stable surface.

stepladders with a 900mm handrail 12 months ahead of legislation changes. "Today, we have seen the market follow suit," Mr Mayo says.



Bailey's patented Quicklock system provides additional stability and resistance to ladder walk.

In October 2006, Bailey launched a world-first ladder innovation. The Comet Plus is a dual-purpose product that converts from a straight ladder to a stepladder with the push of a button that activates a unique locking device.

"Bailey, as leaders in ladder development, engineering and innovation, sees strength, stability and safety as essential performance requirements," Mr Mayo says.



# Rub 10% off your ACC work levy.



The high injury rates currently affecting the residential construction industry can hurt businesses and ruin lives. That's why ACC has introduced Workplace Safety Discounts – a new way to help self-employed people and small businesses erase injuries at work.



You could be eligible to take a SiteSafe safety training workshop. You'd then be able to apply to rub 10% off the work component of your ACC levy.

Check your eligibility and download an application form at [www.acc.co.nz/wsd](http://www.acc.co.nz/wsd), or call SiteSafe on 04 499 2509 to enrol for training FREE of charge.

## uPVC products

I have recently finished reading the April edition of *Building Today* magazine. You have asked for feedback on products.

I have an issue with the use of uPVC products regarding the manufacture and the disposal of the product at the end of its use.

I believe there is a release into the atmosphere of toxic chemicals with its manufacture, and the disposal is expensive. It's not something that I would recommend unless I was shown that this is not the case.

**Howard Whitteker**  
Quantity Surveyor, David Magill Builders Ltd  
Christchurch

• Thanks for your feedback Howard. Opponents of the product say that the disposal of polyvinyl chloride (PVC) plastic threatens public health and the environment.

Although problematic throughout its lifecycle — from production through to final use — the discarding of PVC as waste poses perpetual hazards.

PVC is widely used in plastic pipes, building materials (eg, vinyl siding, windows), consumer products, disposable packaging and many everyday products.

For more information visit

[www.healthybuilding.net/pvc/pvc\\_disposal\\_report.html](http://www.healthybuilding.net/pvc/pvc_disposal_report.html)

*Building Today* will post this topic for discussion on its web site Forum when we go live later in May with our revamped web site: [www.buildingtoday.co.nz](http://www.buildingtoday.co.nz) — Editor.

## We want your feedback!

*Building Today* wants to know about your experiences with OSH regulations, either good or bad, or anything else regarding Safety in the workplace — for our Safety Part 2 feature next month.

For example, what systems has your company put in place to make your workplace safer and to protect your employees from potential harm? Do you have any opinions on the safety articles and products we've

featured in this issue?

We've got some power tools and accessories up for grabs for readers who respond, so don't hesitate to tell us your views on vital industry issues.

Write to *Building Today*,  
P O Box 35 343, Browns Bay,  
Auckland,  
or fax 09 478 4588,  
or email: [andrew@buildingtoday.co.nz](mailto:andrew@buildingtoday.co.nz)

## Tools of the Trade feedback



The Bosch 14.4V cordless grinder — a cracker according to Ross Matthews.

In the March issue of *Building Today* you requested information on what we tradesman consider our most valuable cordless tool that we swear by.

I have a fantastic one for you.

The Bosch 14.4V cordless grinder is the dogs bollocks! I have had it a number of years now, yet when I returned to New Zealand from Britain I noticed no other tradesman with one.

I don't get it! A lot of New Zealand builders are slow to pick up on the usefulness of such tools which save time and money

This grinder will cut anything, has "SDS" cutting blades which require no spanners to change — you just push a button and release the cutting blade like a lightbulb.

They have a blade guard release that makes getting into tight places to cut an absolute breeze.

I reckon this tool is the ultimate for plumbers, sheetmetal workers, roofers and, of course, builders.

I have not yet used the lithium-ion tools but will replace my battery range with this new technology as my batteries wear out.

**Ross Matthews**  
CEO, Tradetech Tools Ltd  
Nelson

• Thanks for your feedback Ross. Remember, later this month readers will be able to post feedback on our Forum pages at our new revamped web site. Look out for it! — Editor

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*Electron-microscope analysis (ESEM - FEG) of the substrate/Silicate finish system (Mapei R&D laboratory)*



*Enlargement of water droplets on a film of Silancol (Mapei R&D laboratory)*

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## Fresh perspective on an old method

Plaster Brick NZ Ltd's Anthony Elisara answered *Building Today's* call for feedback on Part 1 of our Exteriors feature last month. He says his company differs from most plasterers (this is all they do, and they finish a house every two days). He explains the system, which he says is a reliable and durable way to complete a plastered finished home.

**P**laster Brick NZ Ltd is a reliable plastering system which enables the new home owner to have a beautiful plastered home of substantial quality and without the concerns of "leaky home syndrome".

The PlasterBrick NZ system involves:

- Super fast bricklaying of oversized oven-fired 70mm clay bricks. PlasterBrick NZ bricks are made to be plastered over. The system includes provision for lintels up to 2400mm.
- Super accurate, super fast plastering. The company uses PVC corner beads to re-plumb and to reinforce external corners. It then pumps on massive quantities of sand and cement plaster.

- The company's unique plastering machines mix a blend of enhanced plasters. They are a mineral (breathable) plaster comprising sand, cement, plasticiser, air entrainer, waterproofing, microfibrils, adhesives and curing retarders.
- The machines then pump the plaster onto the wall. They are quick and efficient, and will load from 100-200 sq m of wall per day (at 25mm thick). Plastering a typical house takes one day per coat.
- To ensure an even, regular decorative finish a final texture coat (usually described as 1mm flat sponge finish) is applied by hand.
- To conceal the weep holes (essential for the drained and ventilated brick veneer cavity) a unique PlasterBrick NZ aluminium louvre is affixed and

painted to match the wall. The holes virtually disappear.

- Three-coat paint finish in any colour, with no LRV restrictions using a lime locking primer and two topcoats.

For builders the PlasterBrick NZ system offers:

- a single co-ordination point for three difficult sub-trades,
- a quick "close-in" — gibstoppers can get in with minimal delay, and
- a better finish. The company uses 2m wide levels and screeds to get a flat wall.

Having thicker plaster allows them to build or shave highs and lows rather than follow the brickwork.

## Move beyond the ordinary



Creating a designer showpiece out of your home is as simple as featuring CraftStone manufactured stone veneer. Capturing the rugged appeal and essence of natural stone to add both stature and permanence, CraftStone is suitable for interior or exterior, residential, commercial and landscaping applications. Offering an extensive selection of appealing styles and colours, acute attention to detail – and manufactured to be water repellent, fireproof, lightweight, and resistant to variable climatic conditions – CraftStone is the solution to complement any design scheme.

t 0800 63 8899 [www.craftstone.co.nz](http://www.craftstone.co.nz)

The benefits of CraftStone include:

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- Superb thermal insulation and sound reduction gains
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- Virtually maintenance free
- 25-year warranty
- The look of natural stone at half the price
- Craftstone will add value to your home

# Huge conference progressive dinner goes off without a hitch!

**A**fter many months of planning, the second night of the recent RMBF Conference 2007 in New Plymouth finally rolled around.

Carters, in conjunction with Laker House of Travel, had organised a progressive dinner which spread across four restaurants in New Plymouth — potentially the largest progressive dinner ever held in New Zealand!

The four restaurants involved were the Waiau Estate, Gusto, Bach on Breakwater and Burgess House.

All four venues entered into the spirit of the event and ensured that the food and drink were ready when needed in what was a logistically tight evening.

Around 280 guests hopped onto buses which took them to their first designated venue, at which they had a few welcome drinks and a delicious main meal.

By the end of the first session, everyone was enjoying themselves and one of the musicians even had a few couples up and dancing.

From there the guests hopped back on the bus to their second venue where they enjoyed a sumptuous dessert buffet.

Fun on the buses included quizzes, helium balloons (and helium voices), music and one group was even treated to a trip to the lookout to see New Plymouth by night.

The guests at each of the four venues also had the opportunity to win a case of Villa Maria Reserve wines for building the tallest structure from a shoebox of odds and ends, including lollipop sticks, pipe cleaners, sellotape and blu tack — and quite a few used the box the game came in as well!

After that it was home James, or in to town to watch the rugby league after a great evening of food and entertainment.

Carters would like to thank Laker House of Travel, the Taranaki Registered Master Builders Association, Carters New Plymouth branch staff and the four venues for their support to ensure the night went off without a hitch.



*Above: Some of the creations in the "tallest structure" competition.*

*Below: It was all smiles at the largest progressive dinner New Plymouth has ever seen!*



## The new Dimond Christchurch



**B**ig changes have been happening for Dimond's Christchurch branch recently. The roofing, cladding and structural products manufacturer has opened a new 4500 sq m site in the Christchurch suburb of Hornby. The new premises offer a real advantage to the busy roofing installer, builder or renovator.

Located at 89 Buchanans Road, Dimond's latest site brings a new level of efficiency for staff and customers, with a streamlined drive-through system that allows ease of access and product selection, all within the shortest possible time. It also allows Dimond the space for future expansion.

The new facility showcases many of Dimond's products, including Dimondek 630, which is a concealed fixed roofing system, meaning no fixings pierce the roof, eliminating the chance of leakage due to incorrectly installed screws.

Dimondek 630 can also be produced on site, allowing architects the freedom to design buildings with roof sheets up to 100 metres in length.

Dimondek 630 holds the New Zealand record for the longest roofing sheet at 65 metres, produced for the Turners and Growers Distribution facility in Christchurch. It was also used recently on the Deleat's Wine Estate facilities in Blenheim, helping to create a stunning architectural statement.

Steelspan 900 roofing was used on the Christchurch site's canopy roofs due to its strength and ability to span large distances, while Dimond V-Rib features as the wall cladding inside and out.



The V-Rib has been produced in Habitats Threadbow White, which is a bright, white colour that improves lighting conditions internally and provides an attractive external facade.

Further improving the internal lit environment is the use of Durolite natural lighting in the roof. Durolite sheets disperse free natural light evenly within the building, reducing the need for artificial light, lowering long-term power requirements and greatly improving working conditions.



Durolite is guaranteed to enable the transmission of natural light for 25 years while reducing glare, solar heat gain and UV radiation.

Dimond has also unveiled some innovative manufacturing technologies. Their new, automated metal folder brings the benefits of increased precision, heightened consistency and enviable speed in the production of roofing accessory products.

Innovation that results in increased productivity and consistency makes good financial sense in anyone's book, and the new technology allows Dimond to fulfil more of its customers' needs consistently, cost-effectively and with maximum efficiency.

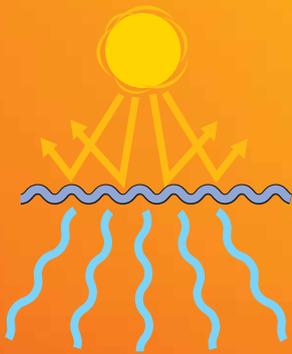
The new branch was officially unveiled on April 12 when more than 150 customers, staff and suppliers attended. The event saw Fletcher Building chief executive Jonathan Ling officially open the branch after Diana Rattray of Christchurch Cathedral performed a blessing and a karakea.

It is open Monday to Friday, between 7.30am and 5pm. Customers are encouraged to visit the new showroom where trained customer service representatives will also be available to assist with any enquiries.

*Above: The new branch frontage and from the air. Left: Fletcher Building chief executive Jonathan Ling officially opened the new branch.*

# DUROLITE HEATGUARD

Dimond's revolutionary Durolite® HeatGuard™ range is specifically designed to reduce the solar heat transmitted into a building while maintaining a high level of visible lighting.



Durolite HG4 and Durolite HG8 have infra-red ray reflecting additives in the gel coat which reduce heat without losing light transmission plus Durolite HG4 and Durolite HG8 block 99% of the harmful ultraviolet UVA and UVB rays for extra protection.

When this energy efficient product is used as roofing or cladding, costs for cooling and lighting in commercial and residential buildings are reduced.

## HOW IT WORKS

The heat we feel from sunlight is actually the solar energy from the sun being transmitted by infra-red rays on a different wavelength to visible light. Durolite Heatguard is designed to reflect most of the infra-red rays so they do not pass through the Durolite sheet, thereby reducing the amount of heat entering the building while maintaining a high level of visible light.

Product	Visible Light Transmission	Total Solar Transmission	Selectivity Transmission Index
Durolite HG4	64%	50%	1.28
Standard clear	63%	63%	1.00
Durolite HG8	49%	36%	1.36
Standard opal	36%	40%	0.90

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- ✓ 20% less heat without any loss of light compared to clear or opal sheets
- ✓ Reduce the need for artificial light
- ✓ Blocks 99% of harmful UV rays
- ✓ Wide range of profiles and sheet lengths

## Wall system launched recently

**A** new system for producing cast concrete panels has been launched recently.

Reids Construction Systems says the system comprises of large steel mobile casting beds, a modular formwork system and seismic reinforcing mesh.



The system now offers many unique and innovative features that have been developed over several years.

Two casting beds and formwork to suit were purchased by New Zealand Crane Hire. The beds are 12m long and 3.2m wide. These were then hired by Marra Construction in Tauranga, and have been used to produce the concrete panels in the new FIL process store in Mt Maunganui.

A total of 94 panels were cast for the job. Each panel is an average of 7m high and 4m wide, and weighs 11 tonnes. The panels were a mixture of 140mm and 175mm thick. Firth supplied 40MPa concrete and also undertook crush and Schmit Hammer tests.

The formwork system used was supplied by Reids. This comprised of LVL ripped to the correct dimension on site. The LVL formwork was capped with Reids' extruded capping and fillet. The form release used on the beds was PINZ and the surface finish achieved was F5+.

The new system has significantly increased efficiency. Panels were produced to a high standard with a 17-hour turnaround, with lower labour and formwork costs.

## Shoo fly

**G**ood old kiwi ingenuity has resulted in another first for Resene.

Musca domestica, otherwise known as the common housefly, is a well known cosmopolitan pest responsible for transporting disease-carrying organisms and damaging surfaces.

When resting, adults regurgitate a liquid that results in spots on the surface combined with other darker spots, both of which can be difficult to remove without damaging the paint surface.

Resene has found a way to resolve the unwanted fly spot nuisance through a novel approach — create a surface that flies don't like landing on and you'll minimise the appearance of fly spots.

This novel concept has been formulated into Resene SpaceCote Flat Fly Deterrent, designed to discourage flies from landing on areas painted with the product and minimising the appearance of fly spots and keeping the paint finish looking its best for longer.

Extensive testing by an accredited laboratory has shown significant reductions in fly spots compared to standard paint systems. The product combines all the benefits and performance of Resene SpaceCote with the added bonus of fly deterrent.

# BCATS initiative introduced

**T**he Building and Construction Allied Trades (BCATS) initiative is a new entry level qualification being introduced by the Building and Construction Industry Training Organisation (BCITO) and BETA (Built Environment Training Alliance).

Recently profiled by BCITO chief executive Ruma Karaitiana at the annual Registered Master Builders' Federation conference in New Plymouth, the BCATS qualification will be taught at secondary school level and will give students grounding in all the construction trades offered.

BCITO apprentice numbers are steadily increasing, growing from 8150 in 2005 to 8700 in 2006. Mr Karaitiana attributes the rise to more positive attitudes from parents and teachers who now recognise the trades as a valuable career, and are encouraging students down a trade-based career pathway.

The BCATS initiative will develop and implement a set of unit standards appropriate for numerous construction areas at an entry level. It aims to integrate all aspects of the qualification into the school curriculum and NCEA.

By providing construction-related examples in a number of core subjects, it will encourage maths (for example) to not only be taught in the classroom, but also to be reinforced in the workshop.

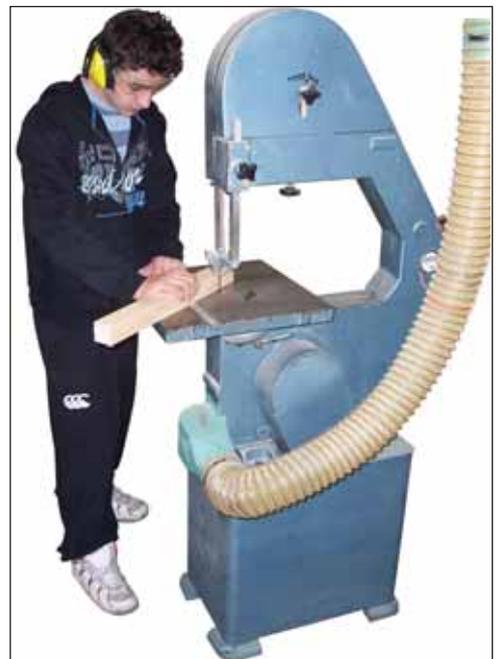
This year a pilot programme with 10 schools has been initiated. The purpose of the BCATS pilot programme is to evaluate the suitability of the draft resource, assessment and support material for the draft new unit standards.

These units have similar common assessment tasks as those contained in the existing Elementary Construction Skills qualification.

The pilot will also provide the opportunity for unit and achievement standards from other secondary school curriculum areas to be evaluated for their suitability and content.

Once the pilot is completed and the feedback analysed, decisions will be made on the final structure of the qualification/s in the National Qualifications Framework domain, and the content of the unit standards, resource, assessment and support material.

The BCITO aims to deliver the BCATS qualification nationwide in 2008.



# That awesome wall of China

With but a few months to the next Olympiad in Beijing, **Dr Kerry Rodgers** ruminates upon the world's longest cemetery



*The Great Wall of China as seen in a false-colour radar image taken from the Space Shuttle in April 1994.*

*Image courtesy NASA*

**T**he Great Wall of China is the world's longest man-made structure. It runs for over 6350km more or less along the border between northern China and Inner Mongolia.

It is a composite fortification built to keep out raids from northern tribes.

There have been five major walls. The first four were constructed during the Qin (208 BC), Han (1st century BC), Sui (7th century AD) and Five Kingdoms (1138-1198 AD) Dynasties.

These consisted of rammed earth with watch towers built at regular intervals. Essentially, they were little more than frontier demarcations rather like Offa's Dyke (*Building Today* April 2004). All have largely vanished.

The wall visited by today's tourists was largely built

during the Ming Dynasty. Work started about 1368, continuing to 1640. Most building occurred after 1560 when the Mongols were proving particularly aggressive.

This last wall was built on a far grander scale than the earlier efforts. It used longer lasting materials, drawing on those immediately available to each stretch of wall — for example, limestone near Beijing, granite and fired brick elsewhere.

Two parallel walls were built of stone or brick with earth and rubble rammed between, before being topped with stone slabs.

Improvisation was the norm. In places, blocks were cemented with sticky rice and egg whites, and where substantial materials were scarce, dirt was rammed

between rough wood secured by woven mats.

As in the earlier walls, defensive forts were placed at regular intervals, each with its own unique stairwell and entry to confuse attackers.

Mind-boggling as the wall is, the reality is that over a million people died in its construction. It is sometimes known as the longest graveyard on Earth.

The wall lost its strategic value in 1644 when Mongolia's Manchus bribed a Chinese general to open the gates of Shanhai Pass and allow their army through.

Once the Manchu army had overwhelmed the Chinese, the Manchu territory to the north was amalgamated with former Ming China to the south to give us roughly the borders of modern China.

Today much of the wall is in a bad state. There is no Resource Management Act in China, and the wall's stones have been quarried to provide building material for provincial roads and local homes.

Parts have been destroyed as later constructions have sprawled across it.

Elsewhere, sections have been preserved and even reconstructed, but at least a third is gone for good, with another 20% badly eroded.

There is a popular perception that the wall is the sole man-made structure on Earth visible from outer space. Neil Armstrong is of the opinion this is an urban myth.

It is certainly not visible from the Moon, and only one astronaut claims to have seen it with the unaided eye. All others Armstrong has spoken to have not.

However, with a good camera and false colour imaging it photographs well. Readers may wish to trace its course along the NASA image shown.



*The Great Wall near Beijing in winter.*

*Image: Andreas Tille, Wikipedia Commons*

# Appeal to the High Court of adjudicator's determination in the WHRS — Contributory Negligence

**Tim Bates** of Auckland law firm Legal Vision reports on how a house owner's contributory negligence reduced their WHRS payout



**T**he recent case of Hartley & Hartley v Balemi and Others concerned one of the first appeals from an adjudicator's determination in the WHRS.

Mr and Mrs Hartley had purchased a "leaky home" in April 2003. They soon thereafter noticed that the house was leaking and duly filed a claim with the WHRS. Their claim proceeded by way of adjudication in the WHRS and a determination was made.

The adjudicator determined in summary that:

- the house leaked substantially and, as a result, had suffered extensive damage necessitating considerable remedial work,
- the reasonable cost of the required remedial work was \$284,685,
- most significantly for the point of the appeal, the Hartleys ought to have the damages they were entitled to reduced by 66% for contributory negligence.

The effect of such a large contributory negligence award against the Hartleys was to reduce their net recovery to \$83,631 of the repair costs.

It left them severely short of the monies needed to carry out the repairs. It was not surprising in light of this that they decided to bring this appeal.

The first grounds of contributory negligence found against the Hartleys by the adjudicator was that they failed to take steps that a reasonable prudent prospective purchaser would take.

The adjudicator reasoned that the Hartleys were aware of the risks associated with monolithic-clad houses and, knowing that, they chose not to engage a professional building surveyor.

The second ground of contributory negligence was for failing to mitigate their loss. It was found by the adjudicator that they failed to take any steps to prevent further loss occurring. It is a principle of common law that they must take steps to mitigate loss.

There were other elements to the appeal brought by the Hartleys, but it was only on the grounds of the contributory negligence finding that they were successful.

The appeal came before Justice Stevens. He looked closely at the law on contributory negligence and ruled that the foreseeability of risk of harm is a prerequisite to a finding of contributory negligence.

Further, he warned that subjective elements ought not to be imported into the standard of care for a claimant. He then went on to analyse the adjudicator's findings on contributory negligence.

He concluded that the factual findings of the adjudicator would suggest that the Hartleys were not at fault when measured by the reasonable foreseeability test.

He stated that the adjudicator wrongly applied a subjective test, by relying on aspects personal to Mr and Mrs Hartley (Mr Hartley was a builder), which had the effect of placing a higher standard or care upon them, rather than applying the reasonableness standard required by law.

In short, Justice Stevens ruled that they were not contributorily negligent in failing to retain the expert report of a building inspector prior to purchase.

Further, he ruled that the adjudicator made no factual findings as to how the fault of the part of the Hartleys was causative of the losses which they suffered.

A determination had been made as to the fact that remedial work was required to repair this leaky building. However, no factual link had been established between the damage and the alleged contributory negligence of Hartleys.

Accordingly, the contributory negligence apportionment was decreased by 33% on the basis that this aspect of the appeal was successful. Justice Stevens accepted that the finding of contributory negligence on the basis of failure to mitigate the damage was a correct finding.

The evidence established that, apart from lodging a claim with WHRS, the Hartleys took no steps to mitigate the damage that was occurring to the house.

The net result for the Hartleys was that they doubled their recovery against the parties.



**LegalVision**

**At Three Lamps Lawyers**

Legal Vision specialises in providing legal advice to the Building Industry.

**Principal: Timothy Bates LLB (Hons)**

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*To search archived articles and other resources! Check out our soon to be revamped web site!*

[www.buildingtoday.co.nz](http://www.buildingtoday.co.nz)

## Tip 37. Grooved jambs, architraves and joint placement around openings

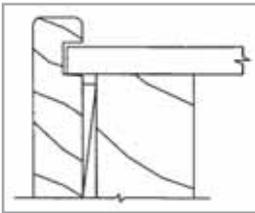
The use of architraves for finishing around doors and windows is recommended for the following reasons:

- Larger plasterboard sheets can be used, resulting in fewer joints.
- Speedier installation of plasterboard.
- Reduced chance of remedial work due to better placement of joints.

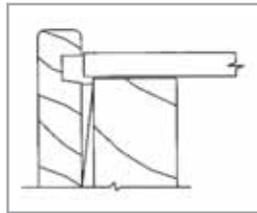
Architraves make best practice fixing of plasterboard much simpler. If the use of grooved jambs is unavoidable there are some golden rules to be followed.

The groove must be at least 1-2mm wider than the board that is being used. Trying to get a 10mm plasterboard into a 10mm groove will be difficult.

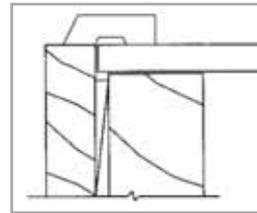
The back of the groove must line up with the face of the substrate.



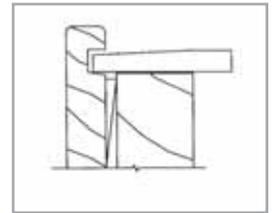
Correct



Incorrect

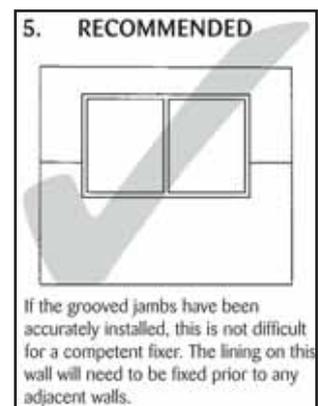
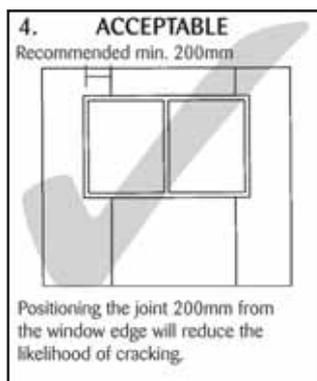
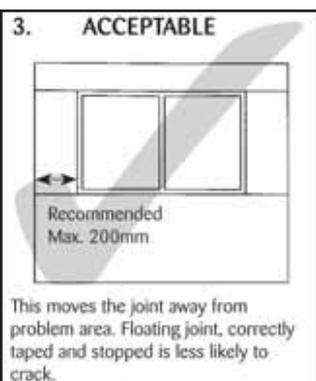
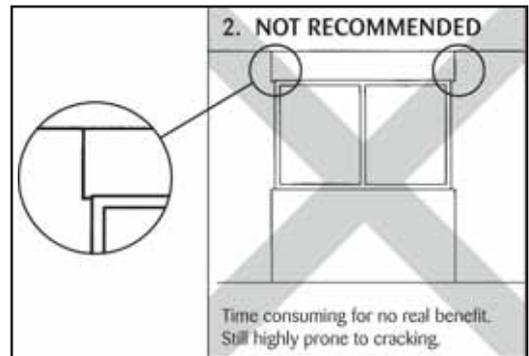


Recommended option using architrave



DO NOT place the tapered edge of a sheet into the groove. This requires unnecessary additional stopping. POOR PRACTICE!

### Joint Placement Options Around Openings



# Become a Future-Proof Builder

**You should have heard a bit of talk by now about the concept of Future-Proof Building. The easiest way to sum it up is this: it's building a better home to live in now, that's worth more to the owner in the future.**

Carters have made a major commitment to the future-proofing message, and we're out there working with Future-Proof suppliers to educate the consumer about what it means to them. At the same time, we're talking to you, the trade, about how becoming a Future-Proof Builder can add value to your business.

## **Are you ready for the future?**

Becoming a Future-Proof Builder lets you leverage off a major industry initiative, designed to educate consumers about the importance of long-term solutions when they're building or renovating.

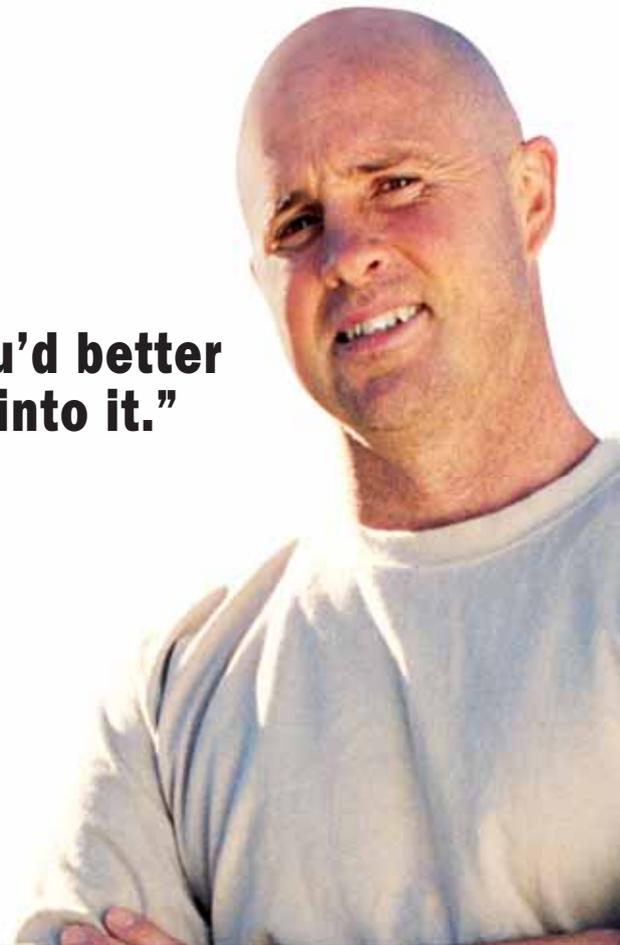
The Future-Proof Building programme gives you the tools to educate your customers, so that they know how you can build them a better home to live in now, that's worth more to them in the future.

**To find out more about becoming a Future-Proof Builder, including information for your customers, call 0508 FUTURE, visit [www.fpb.co.nz](http://www.fpb.co.nz) or talk to your local Carters Rep.**

**"Everyone is  
talking about it."**



**"So you'd better  
look into it."**



**FPS**

FUTURE-PROOF BUILDING

**CARTERS**  **Your Building Partner**