

NEW ZEALAND

# building today

THE OFFICIAL MAGAZINE OF THE REGISTERED MASTER BUILDERS FEDERATION

AUGUST 2008  
VOL 18 NO 7



Sustainable  
housing  
development  
takes shape  
in Papamoa



*Designing  
Our Future:  
Departing CEO  
Pieter Burghout's  
final BT column*



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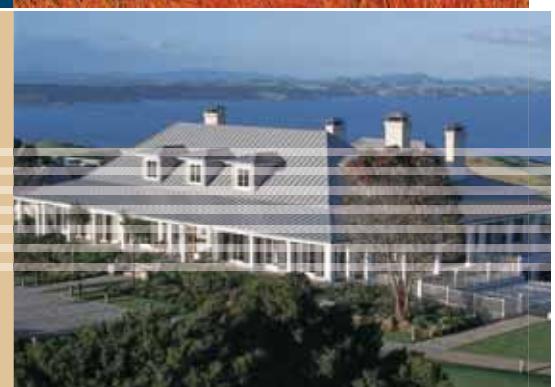
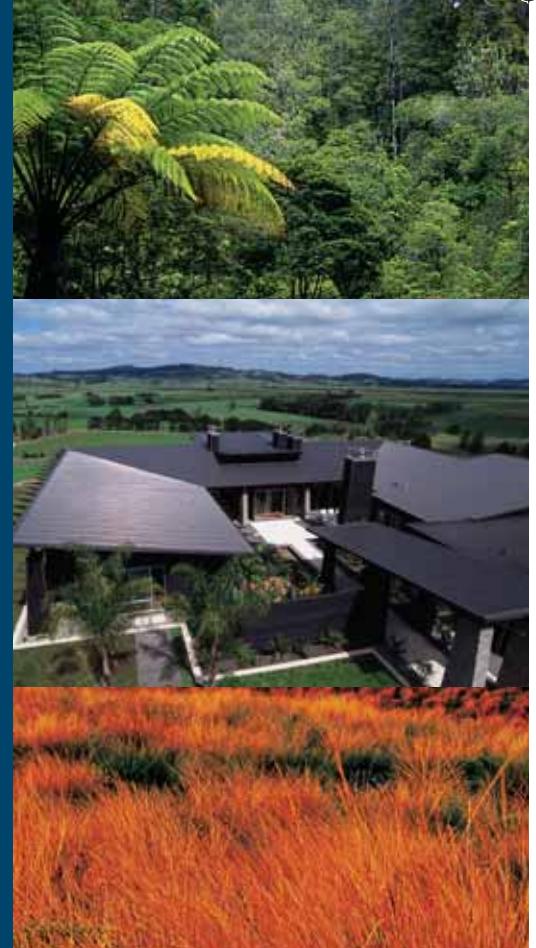
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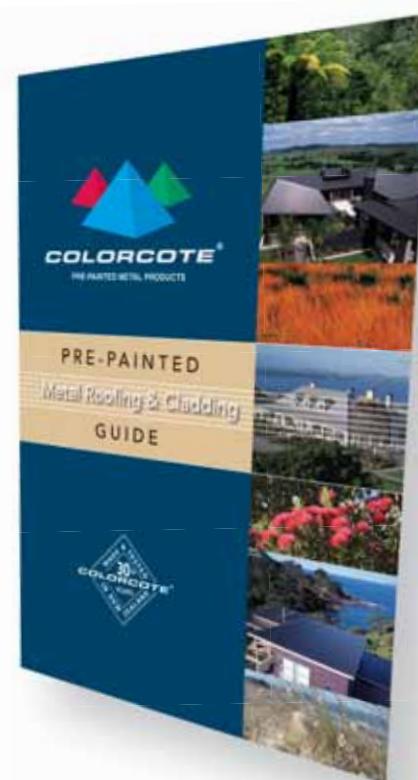


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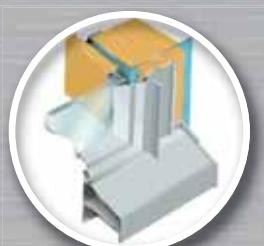


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**BRANZ Appraised**  
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# building today

RMBF chief executive Pieter Burghout departs the organisation at the end of August and will leave it in unquestionably good shape.

Pieter writes his final column for *Building Today* in this issue, and ponders his 8-point plan for the future of the construction industry.

He will take up a new position as chief executive of BRANZ so will be fortunate enough to still be able to have a hand in seeing his plan come to fruition. We profile Building Recruitment, a company dedicated to finding and placing personnel for New Zealand construction companies, and take a look at a sustainable housing development taking shape in the Bay of Plenty.

And more monthly news, views and opinions about issues affecting the construction industry in New Zealand are all featured in this issue.

Andrew Darlington  
Editor

# chief's chat

by ceo pieter burghout

## Designing our future

Welcome to my last Chief's Chat as RMBF chief executive! It's certainly been an interesting challenge for me to draft an entertaining and engaging editorial each month.

And when you have done 32 or so of them over three years, I can honestly say it's been a lot of fun.

And I have been always amazed, as I have travelled around the country catching up with builders — members and non-members — as to how many people actually read these editorial pieces! It's what makes all that effort worthwhile.

In writing this last piece, I wanted to have a go at "future designing" the construction industry — in other words, what would be my plan for where the industry should be in 10 to 15 years' time (if not as soon as we can!):

**1 Profitability:** First, we need to make sure the industry remains profitable. Our industry is no different than any other, in that the businesses that make up this industry all need to be profitable to thrive and survive.

We need to better understand the drivers of profitability, across companies large and small, and ensure company owners know how to make and keep their businesses profitable.

**2 Meeting customer needs:** Next, we need to ensure the industry is always up with the play with what our customers need, short term and long term.

Our industry can be a bit tardy in that regard, with a "what we built yesterday should be good enough for tomorrow" attitude.

We need to be constantly researching what our customers' needs are and spreading that message throughout the industry.



**3 Taming the boom and bust cycle:** One of our biggest eternal industry challenges is surviving the boom and bust cycle that we seem to endure every 10 to 15 years. Some would argue that the boom/bust cycle helps weed out the poorer performers in the industry.

However, I would argue that the extreme boom and bust cycle brings our industry to its knees way too much.

We need to understand the drivers of the industry cycle — such as interest rates, immigration levels, government infrastructure spending, and demographics — and we need to work with the "owners" of those drivers to see what we can influence to ensure a more "steady as you go" approach.

We would rather be building 25,000 new homes each year and build \$4 billion worth of commercial building on an ongoing basis, than build 30,000 homes one year and 20,000 the next.

We need to tame that boom and bust cycle to bring some ongoing sanity to the market.

**4 Affordability and green/sustainability:** I have always seen these two objectives as being closely intertwined. We can't build sustainable homes unless they are affordable too.

Home owners won't want to spend extra thousands of

dollars on a greener home if that extra cost puts the house out of their price range.

Affordability requires a fierce determination from those involved in the "fixed/competition-free" parts of what makes a house — such as land, regulation and compliance costs — to ensure their costs are as low as they reasonably can be.

Sustainability requires a great deal of research, information transfer and industry up-skilling to ensure we are truly delivering green buildings.

**5 Quality/innovation and productivity/efficiency:** This area comes in two parts — first, we need to keep a continued focus on raising the quality bar across the sector.

The second part is in two parts as well — as sort of noted above, we need to have a rules and regulatory framework that supports and enhances what builders do on site, rather than overly constricting them with so much red-tape.

Post leaky buildings, the regulatory pendulum has clearly swung too far one way, and now there needs to be renewed efforts to get that pendulum more in the middle.

We can't rest on our laurels, and we need to keep driving that quality, innovation and productivity/efficiency focus across our industry.

**6 Knowledgeable, skilled industry professionals:**

We need to ensure we have a knowledgeable, skilled, professional and appropriately-paid workforce.

For too long we have undervalued the skills base in our industry, and we paid the price for that in the late 1990s/early 2000s when we could hardly get anybody to work in the industry.

We have finally got industry training to where it needs to be, with 10,000-plus people in apprenticeship training with the BCITO and other training providers in our sector.

Long may that last on the one hand, and on the other hand we need to get the upper education and training levels sorted as well.

**7 Products and materials fit for purpose:** We need to know that the products and materials we use in our sector are fit for purpose.

We need to know that they will do what the manufacturers/suppliers say they will do, and we need to know that, in cases where it's essential to know (eg structure and envelope), those products should be suitably tested and verified to know, as best we can, that they will do the job that we expect of them.

Most of all, we need a system that validates that fit for purpose, rather than having designers, builders and suppliers just relying on statements from manufacturers/importers.

**8 An industry future that is designed and owned by the industry:** We need an industry future that the industry has itself designed and owned. It seems sometimes that everyone else but the industry is having a say on our future — central government, local government, consumers etc.

On the one hand that is sort of okay because, in essence, everyone has an interest in the built environment. On the other hand, that's not okay, because we need to own the future of our industry.

Builders want to build good quality, affordable and sustainable homes, and we know better than most, I suggest, how we should get there.

We need to get better, much better, at standing up for the industry that we want, and to design that future for ourselves accordingly.

So, there's my 8 point plan! I am fortunate enough to have another role within the BRANZ Group where I can perhaps have some hand in seeing that plan come to fruition.

Finally, can I take this opportunity to sincerely thank all the people, companies and organisations that I have engaged with, worked with and dialogued with over the past three-plus years.

### Enjoyable journey with RMBF

I have enjoyed my journey with Registered Master Builders immensely, and I hope I have added value to the organisation and to the industry over my time working in my chief executive role. I look forward to continuing to add value to the industry as best I can in my BRANZ CEO role.

Can I particularly thank Kevin Stanley, Ashley Hartley, Michael Fox, Brent Mettrick and Blair Cranston for their great support to me as RMBF/MBS Board members, and thank all the staff across the whole Federation for their great work.

And I look forward to reading the editorials from the next RMBF chief executive!

Best wishes to all.



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# Empty out the boat!

By RMBF president  
**Brent Mettrick**

**E**very so often, in the construction cycle, we need to turn the comfortable, cruising yacht into a racing yacht.

For some this may have already happened, but for others, particularly if your field of expertise is residential, the time is now.

It's time to remove the fully laden galley, the spare set of oars and the "hangers on" passengers. You need to sail point to point — the scenic route is not an option.

Yes, I do mean the construction industry. To trim the ship you have four choices: increase income, increase the market, reduce overheads or reduce project costs.

In the current market the first is probably not an option, and if you have a solution to the second, please share it with your fellow Master Builders.

This leaves the third and fourth options where \$1 saved is \$1 on the bottom line, or project cost reduction where \$1 saved on each project multiplies on the bottom line with each project built — eg, 20 homes x \$1 = \$20 saved.

We all need to have a good look at our books and ensure that we're on top of our figures. It's really important that your accounts are always up to date so you know exactly how you're tracking at all times.

My advice is to have a look at your Profit and Loss Statement to the end of your financial year (usually either 31 March or 31 July), start at the top and assess some of the expenditure:

- Accounting — don't skimp here, you might even need to upgrade to ensure you have the right processes and information readily available to help your future financial decision making.



- Marketing and advertising — is what you're doing working or do you need to change tack? Direct marketing to your current client list is a very cost-efficient way to drum up new business.
- ACC — get accredited and save 10%.
- Cleaning and gardening — is this possibly something that can be done internally as opposed to external professionals?
- Entertaining — perhaps this is something that could be reined in or put on hold for a while.
- General expenses — what are they and are some of them really necessary?
- Insurance — too often we stick with the status quo because it's easy. Maybe it's time to shop around?
- Office equipment — upgrades on some equipment, eg, photocopiers, can often result in cheaper rates to run. It also means a more professional look for some of that marketing mentioned above that could be brought in-house.
- Power — what's left running on a daily basis that could be switched off until you need it?

This is only a start. It might sound easy but often we

think that we can't do without. It helps to let someone else (perhaps your partner) have a look as they will probably be more ruthless about what you can do without.

As I mentioned earlier, increasing your income by raising prices is not necessarily an option. We found that working closely with our suppliers helped us come up with some really good ideas where we could make significant savings and, therefore, reduce our prices and pass those savings on to our customers.

Another useful exercise is to take a look at your last home costings and really challenge each line item. Don't be shy, really pull it apart and analyse where savings could have been made — you might surprise yourself!

Question things such as:

- is some of the equipment hire over the top?
- do you really need the additives in the concrete or the concrete pump for the front of the home?
- did you cross quote?
- can you recycle some of that skip content? Give the untreated off-cuts to the pensioner next door — you'll feel good too.

We did this with our homes and challenged our specifications. Our clients really helped by letting us know that they didn't want some of the stuff we thought they did.

This resulted in a fairly sizeable drop in the price of each house — great news for the client and, as it turns out, we ended up better off too.

The market has really changed — niche markets are less affected by recession, but the bargain hunters are still out there. With a trimmed ship you should be fast enough to bag a few! Good luck.

\* \* \*

I would like to close by thanking departing chief executive Pieter Burghout for the passion and integrity he has demonstrated over the past three years, and to also acknowledge the support of his wife Sindy and family.

Both the Boards of RMBF and MBS (and me personally) wish him only the best, as he takes on the largest of challenges, and we look forward to our continuing involvement with him in his role as BRANZ chief executive.

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# Great response to East Auckland meeting

**T**

he June meeting of the East Auckland branch of the Auckland Registered Master Builders Association held at the Pakuranga Rugby Club attracted a great response from members and non-members.

Invitations were extended to the wider building community and their partners, with 153 people attending.

The guest speaker was Building and Construction Minister Shane Jones who spoke about his intentions for continuing to reform the construction industry.

Sponsors Flashman presented their new flashing system but also entertained the crowd, with special guest Jane Kiely (from Mitre 10 Dream Home) who MC'd a builders v suppliers quiz show — which the builders won of course!



Above, from left: Building and Construction Minister Shane Jones, Kieran Mallon (ARMBA Board), Ross Faulkner (ARMBA Board) and Paul Belcher (Eastern branch committee).

Left: Jane Kiely running the builders v suppliers quiz which the builders won!

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# RMB HOUSE of the Year COMMERCIAL Project Awards

in association with PlaceMakers

## Ninety-year-old home restored to glory

The painstaking renovation of a two-storey Arts and Crafts-style house paid off for Clive Barrington Construction Ltd, winner of the Heart of the Home Kitchen Award in the Registered Master Builders 2007 House of the Year, in association with PlaceMakers.

The house, located in one of Christchurch's most prestigious suburbs, has a history of familial and institutional use, and was in a poor condition prior to the renovation.

From the outset, company owner Clive Barrington realised it would be a major renovation project.

The house had to be completely stripped of interior linings and much of the existing flooring. All existing windows and doors were also removed, and the rear ground floor was completely remodelled with a new family room created.

Clive says it was important to the client that the original character of the historic property was retained, while still modernising it to include all the conveniences necessary for contemporary living.

"The kitchen is a perfect example of the work we did on this home. We crafted an entirely new kitchen that fitted seamlessly with the design style of the rest of the house. Its detailed, carved wood panels incorporated the

hi-tech kitchen appliances in a way that ensured the historic style of the home was retained."

The team of builders and subcontractors, which numbered more than 50, worked for 18 months on the renovation project.

"The client was amazed with the result. I think they never realised the home could look as good as it does," Clive says.

"A renovation of this scale requires a lot of time and effort, and is inevitably costly, but the result is a stunning home. This house has already been around for about 90 years, and it will be around for another 90 years thanks solely to these renovations."

Mr Barrington has been building for 26 years, and says his company only builds architect-designed houses.

"We have great relationships with a number of (architecture) firms. Sometimes they will come to us with a client of theirs, but more often than not we are now getting clients who want us to build their home as well as our advice on who is best to design it."

While architect-designed homes are generally far more detailed and complex, Clive believes they are the most satisfying homes to build.

"I have been involved in such a range of properties over my years in the industry – from edgy urban dwellings to million-dollar country

homes. I have a real passion for quality design which has led me to build only one-of-a-kind homes."

Clive Barrington Builders Ltd is an "old hand" at the House of the Year competition, with the company winning the Canterbury House of the Year Supreme Award in five of the past seven years, and taking out the national title in 2004.

Clive says its success in the competition comes down to two things. "We only enter one stunning property in the competition each year, and to ensure that property really is stunning we hold to the basic business mantra of doing things well in a traditional manner."



# Waking up every day in an award-winner

**R**ob van Weerd is reminded of his success in last year's House of the Year competition every day, because he lives in the winning property.

Nestled alongside the Waikato River, this inner-city residence built by Rob's company, Rob van Weerd Construction Ltd, won the Nulook Builder's Own Home award in the Registered Master Builders 2007 House of the Year, in association with PlaceMakers.

Rob and his wife Josie reside in the property. "We were rapt to win the national title as it's getting so hard to do these days! It's all the more special because it is our home," Rob says.

Rob and his wife purchased the section a year before construction started, giving them enough time to present the architect with a detailed description of what they wanted.

"While we gave the architect a pretty open brief we certainly provided him with a firm idea of what we were thinking of, which I think helped him to come up with such a special style."

The home has a striking contemporary design

incorporating a complex multi-layered, curved roof. Rob ensured the property was future-proofed by double layering Gib board, and including a concrete mid-floor to provide the home with passive heating.

It also boasts a generous home theatre, a chef's kitchen, central heating, computerised lighting and excellent indoor-outdoor flow thanks to north-facing decks that overlook Hamilton city. Like the design of the home, the interior has been strongly influenced by the couple.

The construction process lasted 14 months, and while Rob mostly confined his role to project management, he did also help with some of the physical build.

Rob rates the project his favourite during 25 years in the industry. He employs five staff and subcontracts to numerous others, and says taking part in the House of the Year competition has significant pay-offs for the business.

"We definitely benefit from entering and achieving success in the House of the Year competition. I would say that our membership of the Registered Master Builders Federation, combined with our involvement in the House of

the Year, contributes to about 80% of the brand recognition the company has in the marketplace."

With that in mind, Rob van Weerd Construction Ltd has a simple business aim for 2008: "carry on doing what we are currently doing".

"It's an old rule but a good one – the customer is always right. Our business makes a big effort to really listen to our clients. We want every client to walk away from any interaction with us happy, whether it is the end of the project or part-way through.

"We address any problems immediately to ensure our clients are always satisfied."

Rob has clearly followed this principle with his own home – a project close to his heart, which has brought him lasting satisfaction.



# Carpentry apprentices to compete for top honour

**Y**oung carpentry apprentices all over the country are preparing to nail another challenge as they compete in the Registered Master Builders Apprentice of the Year competition, in association with Carters.

The competition is run by industry leaders Carters, the Building and Construction Industry Training Organisation (BCITO), Registered Master Builders Federation (RMBF) and the Department of Building and Housing.

It is staged in 10 regions around New Zealand, and each regional winner will head to Wellington to compete for the national title in October.

A record 135 entries have been received in the 2008 competition, which has experienced huge growth since starting as a Wellington-based contest in 2004.

BCITO chief executive Ruma Karaitiana says the introduction of a national title last year was a huge success. He says the BCITO is pleased to continue supporting the Apprentice of the Year competition as part of its ongoing commitment to celebrate excellence among apprentices and raise awareness of career

opportunities in the industry.

"There are currently more than 9000 carpentry apprentices training with the BCITO, and more than 880 people have already achieved a National Certificate this year," Mr Karaitiana says.

"The Apprentice of the Year awards are an important and valued initiative which recognise the skills and determination required to complete an apprenticeship."

In the coming weeks, entrants in the competition will be interviewed by a judging panel made up of representatives from Registered Master Builders, the BCITO and Carters.

Up to 10 finalists will be selected from each region, and the judging panel will make a visit to each finalist's building site to determine regional winners.

The 10 regional winners will be announced at awards evenings around the country in September and October before gathering in Wellington to compete for the national Apprentice of the Year title on October 21 and 22.

The Apprentice of the Year competition is being run in 10 regions this year — Northern, Auckland, Waikato, Bay

of Plenty, East Coast, Central North Island, Wellington, Upper South Island, Central South Island and Southern.

The winner of each regional competition and up to three guests will be brought to Wellington in October to take part in the national competition. The winner of the national Apprentice of the Year title will be announced at an awards evening following national judging.

Regional winners also receive a prize package which includes:

- participation in a specialist Outward Bound Leadership Programme tailored for Apprentice of the Year winners (value up to \$2500), and
- a scholarship towards completion of study or postgraduate study in any construction or building course (value up to \$2000).

Regional place-getters receive prize packs from Carters, including tools and products from Hitachi, Stanley, Irwin Industrial Tools and Wholesafe, and branded merchandise from the BCITO.

All entrants in the Apprentice of the Year competition also receive an apprenticeship membership to the Registered Master Builders Federation for one year.

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### Introducing Legal Counsel - Leoni Carter

Leoni Carter has taken up the position of in-house legal counsel with Registered Master Builders' Federation. Leoni has a varied legal background most recently with local government on a variety of building and construction issues. Free legal advice is exclusive to members of Registered Master Builders.

### 2008 Seminar Series

Registered Master Builders Federation (in conjunction with Employers and Manufacturers Association and the Department of Labour) is running a series of seminars in the South Island in September. The seminars are only available to RMB members and topics cover: a number of Acts relevant to your business (Employment Relations, Holiday, Wages Protection, Privacy, Human Rights, Minimum Wage), RMBF's online Construction Contracts Act - Payment Claim Wizard, Licensed Building Practitioner—electronic application and BuildersCV. Also, an overview of the up-coming changes to the Master Build 7 Year Guarantee will also be covered.

### August Mobile Deal

Telecom (Total Network Ltd) currently have an extensive range of mobile phones and mobile rate plans available to RMB members. See the August Steal Deal! flyer for the August mobile deal. If you are not on the plan best suited to your communication needs, or if you have just purchased a new mobile and want it connected to your exclusive Registered Master Builder mobile plan - give the team at Total Network Limited : 0800 44 4475 a call to talk about your options.

### Have you got an interesting story...?

Are you working on an interesting project that your fellow Registered Master Builders might like to read about? We're always on the look out for stories about our Members' building projects for Building Today magazine. If you want your project to be the next one we write about, contact Tracey Bree, Marketing and Communications Manager.

This is a reproduction of RMBF's electronic newsletter to members.  
Go to your online copy for access to all the information above plus much more!

# Jones: Inaugural summit lays road map for future

**T**

The inaugural building forum "Leading for the Future" held in Auckland recently has laid down the foundations for the long-term future of the industry, according to Building and Construction Minister Shane Jones.

"It was a hugely significant day for construction. For the first time I brought together the most important people in the industry to discuss the future implications for the sector," Mr Jones says.

"This summit will create a road map for the industry as the economic and climatic times change around us. Construction has an important role to play in the housing affordability question but, like everything else, it is subject to global and local factors which will need to be anticipated, considered and addressed."

"I was pleased that the industry leaders were enthusiastic about being given a platform to express their ideas and views on the number of big issues construction will face in the long term."

Mr Jones says the global context relates to factors such as population growth, climate change, higher oil prices, growing consumer preference for energy-efficient and environmentally-sustainable products, quality of building products, land shortage and economic volatility.

Locally, he says the trends show a slowing population growth but a changing demographic — ie, faster household growth as a result of smaller family and household sizes, ageing population, greater ethnic diversity, population growth concentrated in the urban

areas, especially in the Auckland region, increasing energy costs due to supply constraints and increasing fuel costs, increased land costs and availability in urban areas, housing affordability and an economic downturn.

## Risks and opportunities

"This summit explored those implications for construction. It also looked at risks and opportunities and at sector productivity growth, which is low in comparison to construction sectors in other developed countries and in comparison to other sectors of the New Zealand economy," Mr Jones says.

"Also discussed was the urban population growth and increased transport and energy costs influencing people to be close to where they live, work and play."

"Sector leaders were also asked to consider the barriers to achieving intensive residential developments that are acceptable and affordable to consumers, including families with children."

"And, what are the critical issues that must be overcome for the sector to demonstrate a coherent approach to intensive residential development?"

Mr Jones says he expected the attendant industry shakers and movers to also decide whether a collective think-tank would be an effective way for industry, local and regional government, and central government to work together to address the challenges confronting construction.

"We are searching for a coherent blueprint for the future of construction, and the forum has let us put down the foundations for that road map," Mr Jones says.

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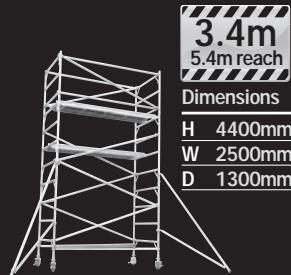
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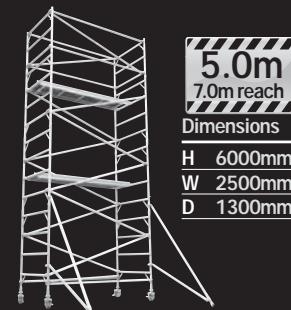
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# Architects urged to 'fly their flag'

## Public confusion prompts increase of logo use

**R**

egistered Architects are being urged to "fly their flag" by making their status as Registered Architects clearer to the public and potential clients.

The New Zealand Registered Architects Board is making available to Registered Architects a variant of its logo which identifies them as individual Registered Architects.

Architects can use the logo on their business cards, letters, emails and other personal communications.

To view the logo variant and read the Board's rules for its use, go to the Board's web site at [www.nzrab.org.nz/default.aspx?Page=183](http://www.nzrab.org.nz/default.aspx?Page=183).

In essence, these rules say the logo variant can only be used alongside the name of an individual Registered Architect.

Board chair Ron Pynenburg says within the construction industry many people offer building design services.

"However, there is often confusion among the public as to who are architects and who are not."

Many of the complaints that the Board receives turn out to be

about people who are not architects," he says.

"Architects are distinct in that they bring to their work a creative vision of what the built environment can and should be, in addition to their technical expertise.

"Architects are also bound by a code of ethics that spans a complete duty of care to their clients.

"For historical reasons most architects in New Zealand cite their academic qualifications on their correspondence, but not the fact that they are Registered Architects. This needs to change, hence this initiative," Mr Pynenburg says.

The New Zealand Registered Architects Board has also recently created a service to assist people to find out whether firms offering building design services employ Registered Architects or not.

This, along with a search facility to find out if an individual is a Registered Architect, can be accessed at [www.nzrab.org.nz](http://www.nzrab.org.nz).

• For more info: Ph NZRAB, 04 471 1336

On the web:  
[www.nzrab.org.nz](http://www.nzrab.org.nz)

## RMBF predicts cautious period ahead

**T**

he construction industry is entering "a cautious couple of months", according to Registered Master Builders Federation chief executive Pieter Burghout.

Building consent figures for June showed a significant softening of demand — the value of residential work was 34% lower than in June 2007, and non-residential work was down by 18%.

Having said that, for the year ending June 2008 residential work was down by 6% on the previous year, while non-residential work had increased by 7.4% for the same period.

Mr Burghout noted that in June last year the industry was still coming down from the peak of a prolonged period of booming demand, and the current softening in the market was part of the natural economic cycle.

"The year-on-year data shows the residential market continues to soften slowly, but builders are also a little bit cautious that the big drop in consent numbers for the month of June might be indicative of further troubled times to

come," Mr Burghout says.

"While it's perhaps too late now, we have been asking for some time for the Government to get serious about sorting the constraints facing our sector — improving the availability of land for development, reducing compliance costs, increasing Government infrastructure spending, and a significant boost in immigration are all positive actions that it could take."

"Another reduction in the Reserve Bank's official cash rate during the next couple of months wouldn't hurt either."

The RMBF is still predicting that the residential building sector will pick up again in early 2009, and that the commercial sector will remain relatively strong overall throughout the year.

"Clearly, now is a perfect time for people to be thinking about engaging a builder as their work schedules begin to free up. Consumers should also ensure that they use a Registered Master Builder backed up by the independent Master Build Guarantee, just in case anything goes wrong during or after the project."

# BRANZ appoints new CEO

RMBF chief executive joins the 'brains trust'

**B**

RANZ has announced the appointment of Pieter Burghout as its new chief executive officer.

BRANZ chairman Graham Coe says Mr Burghout has a wealth of experience in the construction industry, and would be a great asset to the organisation.

"Pieter has proven to be a fantastic champion of the construction industry, and we look forward to him bringing his energy and vision to this role," Mr Coe says.

"He has played a crucial role in a number of key areas of industry reform in the past three years, such as Building Code reform, the introduction of builder licensing and the nationwide debate around housing affordability."

Mr Burghout is currently chief executive of the Registered Master Builders Federation, and previously held the same role at the Building and Construction



*Incoming BRANZ chief executive Pieter Burghout will begin his new role on September 1.*

Industry Training Organisation.

He has a law degree, an MBA and is also a qualified builder. He has worked in advisory and leadership roles

in government and industry associations.

Mr Coe says BRANZ is like the "brains trust behind New Zealand's construction industry".

He is looking forward to Mr Burghout leading BRANZ into a new phase of increased activity in its core areas of product and materials research and testing, and communicating new developments to the industry through its publications and training services.

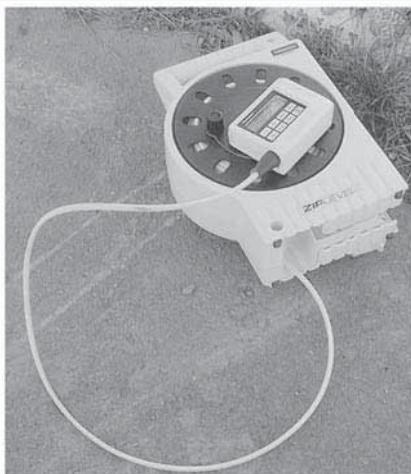
"During the past six years, Pieter has acquired enormous experience and respect working in the construction industry — three years as chief executive of the BCITO and then three as chief executive of the RBMF — so we are thrilled that he has decided to come to BRANZ."

Mr Burghout will begin his new role on September 1.

• **For more info:** Ph BRANZ, 0800 80 80 85

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A photograph showing a worker in a high-visibility vest and hard hat walking on a long, narrow, grey modular platform system (BoardWalk) that spans across a large, flat, light-colored roof. The platform has a diamond plate pattern. In the background, there are some industrial structures under a clear blue sky.

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# New criteria for buying a house: What can I walk to?

**A** new housing initiative to be launched in the Bay of Plenty this year may be a long-term solution to countering petrol prices and fostering closer-knit communities.

Based on historic New Zealand precedents and successful international models, Excelsa Village in Papamoa East is being developed by Bluehaven Management, and has been designed to free residents of their dependence on cars as their only mode of transport.

Bluehaven general manager Jason Macdonald says one of Excelsa Village's big benefits is the planned "walkability" of the neighbourhood, meaning it has been designed to be within walking distance from amenities we usually drive to.

"Taking into account the worldwide situation with petrol, the new criteria for buying a house is going to be 'what can I walk to?'

Classified as Traditional Neighbourhood Design (TND), Excelsa Village is a twist on the traditional approach to neighbourhood building. Key elements of the village include narrow pedestrian-friendly streets, a mix of housing types, quality streetscapes and community facilities.

Roberts Day is an internationally-recognised urban design company consulted on the planning of the village. Australian-based principal Stephen Moore says the development is one of the first to embrace the TND philosophies in New Zealand to create a contemporary coastal village.

"There is a global renaissance of TND neighbourhoods because people want to feel connected to their immediate neighbours and broader community. They foster social interaction, along with health and well-being," Mr Moore says.

He says creating neighbourhoods which are not car dependent is one of the best mechanisms to address housing affordability.

"Owning one less car enables housing to be within easier reach of people. The typical yearly cost of owning a car is around \$9000 which constitutes a \$90,000 mortgage repayment."

Excelsa Village will offer community-focused open green spaces, including a tennis court, children's



*Two of the houses being built in the new Excelsa Village development in Papamoa East.*



playground and barbecue facilities.

Bluehaven Management is so confident the model will work it is building 10 houses immediately, all of which will be completed in October this year.

"Based on overseas models, it has become expected that homes in intimate and highly planned neighbourhoods will be very sought after. There is more demand for houses in these communities than conventional suburban residential subdivisions," Mr Macdonald says.

He says their strategy is about smart growth, not suburban sprawl.

"It is similar to traditional New Zealand neighbourhoods that were constructed prior to World War II. These places focused on the pedestrian, and today they are some of the most cherished and valued places in the country."

"This development has added improvements that enhance lifestyle and safety. For example you'll drive into your garage from behind the home so children can safely walk, run and ride bikes along the front of properties without the risk of being hit by a reversing car."

"There are so many 'tipping points' here — petrol prices increasing, obesity soaring, re-connecting people into functioning communities."

Mr Macdonald says Excelsa Village will be a special mix of seaside, urban and retail experiences. In the village there will be various types of housing, including free-standing cottages, houses, terraced houses, mixed use and apartments.

The first 10 houses, to be built by Ultimate Homes, Classic Builders and Jennian Homes, will be free-standing, and ranging in price from late \$400,000s to early \$500,000s.

Amenities such as parks, schools, retail shops, a gymnasium, a civic building and town square are planned to be built in the future.

"This is a seven-year process which will eventually see around 100 houses, 160 apartments and convenience retailing set within around 8ha that Excelsa Village comprises," Mr Macdonald says.

• **For more info:** Ph Excelsa Village, 0800 PAPAMOA  
 On the web:  
[www.excelsavillage.co.nz](http://www.excelsavillage.co.nz)

# Green Building in Afghanistan flourishes with help of 'Green Machine'

In a country that has been torn apart by civil strife over the past several decades, there is a new hope for those looking to rebuild their homes and lives.

Earlier this year, Geo-Building Technologies, LLC (GBT), a licensee of American company TerraBuilt Corporation International (TerraBuilt), introduced a machine with a new technology that may revolutionise the construction industry in Afghanistan and developing countries around the world.

Simply called "The GreenMachine", this piece of machinery is a portable, self-powered system designed to manufacture structural, precision-engineered tongue and groove compressed earth blocks.

The blocks, nicknamed "TerraBricks," are made from subsoil and small amounts of either cement or lime, requiring no mortar for construction, and which cost less than half the price to produce as conventional kiln-fired bricks (currently the most popular building material in the region).

Not only are the TerraBricks affordable, but they exceed all United States code standards, and are far more energy-efficient to produce than concrete or kiln-fired bricks. GBT began introducing the technology to the region in March 2008, and will gradually expand training and availability of the portable units.

Between 2002 and 2005, the private sector invested more than \$2.5 billion dollars in the Afghan construction industry alone, and there is a need for further investment.

"Attracting foreign direct investment is critical to the reconstruction efforts and sustainable long-term economic growth of Afghanistan," says Yukiko Omura, executive vice-president of the World Bank Multilateral Investment Guarantee Agency.

"There has already been a massive outpouring of interest in our GreenMachine TerraBrick technology," GBT founder Rafaat Ludin says.

"We currently have orders for a number of rebuilding projects, including a Kabul housing complex, gymnasium, orphanage and a vocational training institute.

"Afghans deserve every opportunity to access affordable and sustainable building materials. We believe this is critical to their long-term success as a nation."

In the United States, several large construction materials companies are showing an interest in the largely carbon-neutral TerraBricks as a cost-effective, energy-saving means of building green wall systems for housing or commercial buildings, landscaping and farm outbuildings.

To supply the huge potential demand for this kind of product in the United States market, TerraBuilt's patented process technology would be used in high volume production plants, turning out millions of TerraBricks weekly for distribution to builders, contractors, developers and DIY people.

And, says TerraBuilt chief executive Stephen Keiley, "not only do TerraBricks provide a cost-effective solution for green building worldwide, but it also appears that they could provide the basis for packaging and selling carbon credits".

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# Slick six-speed six-pack from FPV

**T**ravel back in time to 1934 to a Ford plant somewhere in Michigan and try to put yourself in the overalls of a technician at the time.

He's been working with Father Henry's formula for cars for quite some time, and has a pretty predictable working life.

Another Ford comes down the line and he fixes the tail light to the rear body work.

It's a good job, he takes pride in his work and he's accordingly very good at it.

Another Ford comes down the line.

He wonders about the future and where the car — as he knows it — will end up. He picks up a tail light and goes to put it on the rear body work, but then stops.

There is no rear body work! Well, to be more accurate, there's no rear cabin. Our techie has encountered the first Ford Ute.

Here we are, 74 years later and we can tell our 1930s techie where the car — as he knew it — has ended up but, more importantly, for this article anyway, we can tell you where his ute has ended up.

It has become the mainstay of Ford's Antipodean sales as Aussies and Kiwis alike have embraced the ute, and demanded more and more from it and its manufacturer.

An example of this demand is seen here in the new FPV-enhanced F6 Ute — the gateway to the pure performance ute range.

FPV stands for Ford Performance Vehicles, the "skunkworks" in Melbourne which "breathes" on Blue Oval product, delivering a Ford that is just a little bit special.

FPV is a well-established brand "at home across the ditch", and while it has been here in New Zealand for a few years, it has only really come into its own with the FG Falcon launch which saw a complete FPV line-up for Aotearoa.

And that, in a long winded way, brings us to the F6 Ute.

It replaces what we knew as the Tornado, a sophisticated and spectacular foray into the world of turbo-charged, large displacement petrol engines.

Sadly, the Tornado is no more, the whimsical name plate replaced by a somewhat sterile designator.

This is actually in keeping with Ford's idea of the intended buyer — someone who appreciates technical refinement in engineering, rather than the raw power



appeal of an oversized V8 power plant.

The F6 Ute uses the 4-litre, turbocharged, in-line six which produces a healthy 310kW at 5500rpm and an astonishing 565Nm of torque from 1950rpm.

Purists would say it's not all about power — the F6 Ute stands proud on the other improvements FPV has integrated into it. Things such as the option of a six-speed manual or six-speed automatic with sequential Sports Shift for the same price, for instance.

Things such as the inclusion of Dynamic Stability Control to complement the ABS brakes with electronic brakeforce distribution, for instance.

Things such as the driver and passenger front airbags and side/head thorax airbags, for instance. Things such as the 12.1 litres per 100km average fuel economy, which is an improvement of 7% over the previous model, for instance.

And then there is the big highlight — that of styling. The addition of the "Alice Cooper eye patches" or "Kung Fu Panda eyes" for a more contemporary comparison, around the headlights, tells everyone that it's an FPV approaching.

Closer inspection will reveal other distinguishing features such as the titanium mesh mid-grille and the opening of the lower air intake which reveals the inner workings of the intercooler.

The F6 is, whatever else one might think of it, a traffic stopper. This is not the sort of ute to drag up to the building site and dump 300kg of cement into the tray.

Oh sure, the F6 will handle it but, well, you just wouldn't. Not really.

The cargo area measures out as that of a conventional wellside Falcon, so anything you can carry in one of those, you can carry in an F6. Tie-down cleats and points are provided.

## "Walking man"

In the cabin, the F6 includes the newly-upgraded Interior Command Centre screen, complete with the "walking man" who plonks himself down ready to drive — presumably after the engine has done all the checks it needs to do.

As to plonking yourself in the seat, you'll encounter an intriguing fabric braced by suede bolsters and a push-the-button-to-start-the-car arrangement.

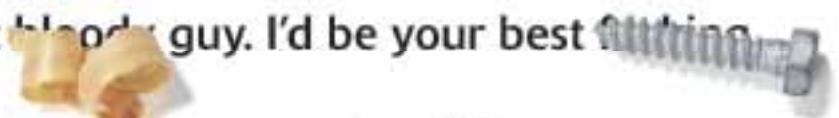
You can plug your iPoddy thingo into the centre console, plug your foot onto the throttle and you're away like the proverbial small flying mouse-like marsupial exiting the Netherworld. Who said it wasn't all about power?

So now you — the successful tradie who doesn't want the baggage of a big V8 but still wants to make a bit of noise, visually and aurally — can avail yourself of the sophisticated showboat, the F6 Ute, at \$63,990.

• For more info: Ph Ford, 09 277 8400

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It goes like ~~screws~~  and pulls like a ~~schoolboy~~  schoolboy. The torque is ~~unbelievable~~  unbelievable. I can pull my boat all the way up and down the hill to Matarangi in 3rd ~~gear~~  gear. My boat's 2 1/2 ~~tonne~~  and Ranger pulls it like it's not even ~~tonne~~  there.

The guys like the Ranger 2WD because its looks staunch like the 4WD. The ~~H~~  2WD looks like a piece of ~~meat~~ . We're all hairy-~~arsed~~  contractors here and you don't put them in a wussie ute.

Funny thing is, I've never been a Ford guy.

I'm actually a dyed in the wool

~~fan~~, but I love this ute."



NZ4WD Ute of the Year 2007



# Fine print reflects risk management

Last month Open Polytechnic law tutor **Leigh Thomson** introduced the basic features of Queensland's statutory Home (residential) Warranty Insurance Policy that also covers "leaky building" defects. It provides total cover of up to \$400,000. In Part 2 he looks at the fine print in the policy.

**T**ime limits are important. In the case of a major defect (category 1), the cover expires six years and six months after the date of payment of the insurance premium or the date of entering the building contract (whichever is the earlier).

Water penetration or defects in construction or products that will lead to water damage are examples of category 1 defects. For a category 2 defect (eg, surface rust on iron roofing) the cover expires six months after the date of practical completion (meaning fit for intended use or occupation).

There are (not unreasonably) time limits on lodging

claims. For a category 1 defect the consumer must do so within three months of the defect, in the opinion of the insurer, becoming evident.

However, for a category 2 defect the consumer must do so within seven months of practical completion or three months of the defect first becoming evident, whichever date is the earlier.

There is discretion to give an extension of time for lodging a claim. This is unlikely to be granted where the defect could have been identified much earlier if investigated by a builder.

Disputes with the insurer have often related to whether the "defect" is a maintenance issue (such as

minor cracking of tiles) or a category 1 or 2 defect, and then whether the consumer made a claim within the required time limit.

There are various responsibilities that a consumer would prudently accept when they take possession of their home. This is reflected in the policy where no compensation is available where the loss is caused or contributed to by gradual deterioration of the building work due to:

- fair wear and tear,
- lack of maintenance,
- neglect of the insured, and
- alleged defects being matters of contractual dispute and not defective construction work.



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# : by the statutory insurer

The policy covers substandard work, and not faulty design or a failure to meet contract specifications where the work is otherwise satisfactory.

A defect has been defined as a fault or imperfection not meeting a standard or a general industry standard or practice.

If the work complies with industry standards but doesn't meet contract specifications, the remedy for the insured is in contract and under consumer protection legislation.

In one case, a steel door jamb was not provided in an exterior back door as per specification. It was not classified as a defect.

There is no liability for the insurer to pay where:

- the consumer unreasonably refuses access to the contractor or agent to undertake remedial work,
- a builder is given a direction to remedy work until such time as the insurer is satisfied the builder won't comply with its direction or a direction of a tribunal or court, and
- the builder has a continuing obligation to complete the work.

The insurer may refuse to make payments for any loss if the works have been completed or rectified without its prior written approval (the reason being prejudice to the insurer who may show a lost opportunity to inspect alleged defects, or to prepare a schedule of remedial work, or to cost remedial work using a competitive tendering process).

## Unlicensed people cannot do remedial work

There is a duty on an insured in general insurance to take all reasonable precautions to avoid further damage. However, with the Queensland policy the insured can't use an unlicensed person to do remedial work.

The policy allows general approval for remedial work if the works are required to preserve the integrity of the dwelling or to prevent imminent consequential damage.

Consumers aren't experts. On one occasion the insurer was unable to inspect work for a number of weeks because of resourcing problems.

It is unfair that a consumer can be prejudiced or have to incur additional expenses because of a resourcing problem within a statutory agency's operation.

Consumers under the policy need to be careful that they don't release the builder from any liability in relation to the insured works, as the insurer will also be released.

The same result applies where the consumer indemnifies the builder in relation to the building works. Ideally, a building contract should be checked by a lawyer before signing to ensure they don't compromise the policy.

## Subsequent purchasers can benefit

Subsequent purchasers can receive the benefit of an existing policy. However, they are not entitled to compensation under the policy if the defect was evident prior to their entering into the contract to purchase.

The insurer will reduce any payment under a claim by any overpayment (where the value of the works exceeds the contract price to be paid).

In one case, the value of the works was \$361,986 and the price to be paid was

calculated at \$220,000. The insurer was entitled to deduct \$141,986 from any valid claim.

In summary, the fine print of Queensland's statutory Home Warranty Insurance Policy generally reflects the risk management by the statutory insurer coupled with responsibilities placed upon the building owner.

If a similar statutory scheme was introduced into New Zealand (a possibility given the new licensing requirements for builders and subcontractors) it would, in most cases, avoid litigation for consumers.

The caveat is that any policy (or guarantee) relating to building defects should not be left unread and consigned to the bottom drawer.

Take part in our online poll: Do you think statutory insurance is the answer to avoiding "leaky buildings-type" legal battles? Go to: [www.buildingtoday.co.nz](http://www.buildingtoday.co.nz)

• For more info: Ph Weathertight Homes Tribunal, 0800 777 757

On the web: [www.dbh.govt.nz/leaky-buildings-and-weathertightness](http://www.dbh.govt.nz/leaky-buildings-and-weathertightness)

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# Recruitment tailored specifically for the construction industry

A recruitment company specifically established for the New Zealand construction industry — that's Building Recruitment, a west- Auckland based company that has found its niche and doing very well thank you.

*Building Today* editor [Andrew Darlington](#) spoke to managing director — and president of the Western Branch of the Auckland Registered Master Builders Association — Kevin Everett, about why he chose to enter the recruitment business.



**Building Today:** Why did you decide to establish a building recruitment company, how did you set it up and what are your aims?

**Building Recruitment:** I'd been looking to start a business in the construction industry for some time, and in my management days I'd been dealing with some recruitment agencies who didn't specialise in the industry, making it difficult for them to understand the specific requirements.

There were many recruitment agents I'd deal with that didn't actually understand the industry — its people, its culture, the regular issues involved in the industry and the pressures that go along with it.

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I would ask agents to look for staff, and I would tell them my needs which they just didn't understand. It was very frustrating. Instead of saving time in the recruitment process, it was taking longer because of the number of CVs I was reading through from candidates who had been put forward by the agency.

**BT:** In your dealings with them, what sorts of things were the agencies not really comprehending?

**BR:** The main things were trying to get the right type of person for the type of job and what the job involved.

It seemed to be very difficult for the agencies I was using to find the right person I was looking for — for example, a project manager to work on a project on-site, who had to understand all the associated issues, have the technical ability to understand the plans and the specific requirements of the project, and who had to understand the impact on other people involved with that project.

The people I was looking for would have to deal with quantity surveyors, project managers, building merchants and architects.

It seemed to be almost impossible for the agency to understand what was involved, so how were they going to be able to put somebody in front of me to do that job?

**BT:** So having trouble finding appropriate personnel prompted you to think about setting up your own company?

**BR:** I thought if somebody knew the industry, had the necessary people skills and was able to identify in candidates the specific skills needed by construction industry companies, that they would do pretty well in this market. I thought, hold on, those are the kinds of things I have done before — I'm a people person and I have many years' experience in the industry.

So what I've brought to building recruitment is a personal interest in placing prospective candidates using the knowledge I've built up during my time in the industry.

My business ethic is that we will work very closely with a candidate and not just take a look at their CV and send them on their way. The first thing we say to candidates is "we are here to help as an advisor".

I believe changing jobs is as stressful as moving house. It's making you move out of your comfort zone, something you have really got to take seriously.

You are dealing with people's lives, and if you put them into a job that you know isn't going to work for them, it won't look good on their CV — it can be a black mark on their employment history. It can also cost the client a lot of money, loss of business or delays on a project.

# construction industry

So you've got to take ownership and responsibility for it, and that's what we are bringing to the recruitment process in the construction industry.

**BT: So if someone called you tomorrow and said they wanted a certain person what are the processes you go through to place the right person with that company?**

**BR:** It would depend on the client's requirements. Our objective would be to sit in front of the client first. We do that for a number of reasons but mainly to establish that personal touch and actually find out more about the business first-hand.

We almost never send any CVs to a client — even if they ask us to — unless we have actually been there. We want to assess the "culture" in the business, and who would be the best fit for that.

An example could be finding a position for a quantity surveyor. A certain QS might want to work in a certain environment, such as being in a room and punching out numbers. We get people like that.

But if the client's work space is more of an open-plan set-up where everybody is face to face with each other then that person might not fit that type of "culture".

Or you might have the opposite — a wee room round the corner wouldn't suit a more flamboyant QS who wants to be out meeting and dealing with people.

From there we go in depth into the detail of the job, analysing job descriptions to match the right people to the right job, the right culture, the right ambitions. We would even look at how easy it is for a candidate to physically get to the office on a daily basis.

Once we've got that information we would look through our database or perhaps implement an advertising campaign which we would discuss with our client. From that point on, under no circumstances, do we send anyone through without us interviewing them first.

It could be that we have already interviewed this person but not for that particular job, so we may call them back in and re-interview them with the specifics for the new position.

And our interviews are pretty in-depth. Some of the feedback we have had from candidates is that our interviews have been harder than the actual interviews for the position. I don't make apologies for that. That is part of our process which ensures we get the right people.

If we don't have anyone suitable on our database, we

tell the client that. We don't send someone just for the sake of sending someone. We talk to the client about that and we start looking at alternative options — again, advertising, screening and going through the above process.

**BT: How long has the company been established, what area do you cover and how many people do you employ?**

**BR:** The company has been in existence since 2005, and the feedback has been very positive. I've got four staff members now — which is more than I was expecting at this point — and they have between eight to 35 years' experience in the industry.

We cover the whole country, and are looking to establish branches in the main centres in the future.

**BT: In general, do you find that your clients want personnel fairly quickly?**

**BR:** Yes, always. If someone resigns then that company normally needs to find a replacement sooner rather than later.

We have had a number of clients who have waited more than three months to find a replacement when dealing with other recruitment agencies, whereas we will find the right person in a couple of weeks because we know exactly who and what is required for the job — and that makes the difference.

**BT: Tell us a bit about your own involvement in the building industry Kevin.**

**BR:** I have more than 22 years' experience in the industry. Sixteen years ago while still living in Scotland I took a fall off a roof, so moved into a sales job. I was working on multi-storey construction and nuclear submarine bases in the Highlands of Scotland.

When I moved to New Zealand I worked for Ajax Fasteners and for Pryda, which specialises in timber connecting systems, before becoming involved in engineering for concrete systems.

Latterly, I was sales manager at Tasman Insulation (Pink Batts) and from there I went into national sales at PlaceMakers national office.

**BT: So you've been involved in many different sectors of the industry?**

**BR:** Absolutely. And I have worked with architects, project managers, national volume builders and major construction companies on projects specifically, and



*Building Recruitment managing director Kevin Everett.*

also with local government on issues such as health and safety.

I have been involved with developing products, looking at standards and how to get all that information to the right people.

**BT: How have you managed to build up a database of available candidates for industry companies looking for specific personnel?**

**BR:** We have an expansive database exceeding 1000 candidates from a number of different fields on our books. We get plenty of interest just by advertising available positions. Or we get more proactive people seeing our adverts and phoning us in the hope of finding other positions that may not have been advertised.

We have found that a lot of our candidates and clients are telling work friends about us, and so that type of networking and referrals are growing.

In fact, we see ourselves as more than a typical recruitment agency. We sit down with candidates and talk to them. In fact, we even train them in some cases. If we see somebody who has got the ability and the attitude, we will invest our own time and train them, advise them and improve them to the required standard.

We've received cards and emails from people thanking us for our assistance and encouragement in helping them become acceptable for a position they thought they might not have been suitable for.

An example of this would be one candidate who had to give a presentation to the chief executive of one of our clients at her second interview.

She hadn't really been involved in presentations before so I spent two hours with her going through training/presentations and she got the position.

That's what our job's about. You've got to give something back — it's a philosophy I believe in, in any walk of life, which is one of the reasons I have recently taken up the position of president of the Western Branch of the Auckland Registered Master Builders Association.

• **For more info:** Ph Kevin Everett,  
**Building Recruitment, 09 835 9149**

On the web: [www.buildingrecruitment.co.nz](http://www.buildingrecruitment.co.nz)

# Tradesmen need to be taught

In Part 2 of his article, **Mike Anticich**, marketing manager of Flashman Flashing Systems Ltd, is convinced that education is the only practical means of achieving best practice methodology to raise industry standards.

**E**ducation is the only practical means of achieving best practice methodology. Building quality homes is a reward in itself and, in the final analysis, is the least expensive practice and the most satisfying to all parties.

A tradesman is, by nature and motivation, a kinesthetic learner. That is, he or she learns the craft by doing. Here is another old saying, this time Chinese: "I hear I forget, I see I remember, I do and I understand!"

These old sayings are full of truth and wisdom, having proved their value over the centuries.

Tradesmen must be taught so that they understand the whole process of building. These days, we train "specialists" who handle small parts of the building process but, at best, have a limited understanding as to how the whole comes together — the interplay of one aspect of the building with another.

## Building process now fragmented

Sadly, I cannot see a return in the near future to the knowledge base of earlier generations because our building methods are so production-oriented in widely

dispersed offsite locations. The building process is now fragmented as many people carry out jobs that individual builders once performed.

Unless the current building control regime is lifted to a new level of inspection and responsibility, providing much needed hands-on advice (which is never going to happen in this liability-focused world we live in), I can only see quality control of our buildings being handed over to private business.

That is, on-site expert project managers or clerks of works running all jobs to assure the delivery of high quality buildings.

Why? Because people do what is inspected, not what is expected! These highly trained clerks of works or building surveyors will be a new breed of quality control officer insisting on quality and best practice.

How can we ever have widespread acceptance of best

practice methodology when government-sanctioned Building Code and compliance documents allow, and therefore endorse, minimum standards?

This new breed of independent building police would have to undergo extensive practical and theoretical training, and develop skills and knowledge that can be explained and demonstrated on-site to an increasingly poorly trained and unsupervised workforce.

They will need to specialise in various building systems and materials, and expertly oversee a wide range of work.

They will also be expensive. Who pays?

The alternative is to go back to the old ways and teach builders how to build. That is, to frame houses, set out and build roofs, flash properly and plan ahead, allow for other trades and to maintain a high degree of finishing skill.



## Tray-dec NZ Ltd

**Traydec 300** has a long history in the composite floor market and now Traydec is excited to announce the launch of two new profiles, **Concrete Saver 60** and **Ultra Span 80**, to join the Traydec 300 line. Both products are the latest generation in hi-tech composite steel decking that allows for both shallower and longer spans. Because this steel deck has no extra height due to profile intrusions, the required slab thickness to control shrinkage cracking is less, resulting in lighter slabs.



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For full details see our web site or call 09 820-9133 or 04 233-9421. A free product catalogue is available and a representative would be happy to discuss your requirements.

**[www.traydec.co.nz](http://www.traydec.co.nz)**

# 'whole process' of building

This is the direction I would like to see building take as it provides a real and valuable depth to the trade and job satisfaction to all concerned.

It will make tradespeople valuable and even usher in a revival of the cottage industry builder and middle-to-larger companies that can challenge those housing companies that presently control the market and prioritise cost-cutting.

Even if it is unnecessary to build a truss or frame a roof, knowing how to do it is of immense value!

In the meantime, if none this should actually happen, it is essential that each phase of the building process is simple, efficient and carried out by properly trained specialists.

It is an indisputable fact that one of the most important, problematic and topical building issues is flashing. Since 50% of leaks in leaky homes occur at the window and door junctions, it is vital that this work is carried out by specialists.

For the first time in the industry there is a proprietary, Branz-appraised and vigorously tested window and door flashing system available that is installed by skilled and properly trained technicians.

Along with fellow director Steve Hotton, a registered master builder and project manager, Flashman invented a highly innovative extruded aluminium window and door flashing system that is New Zealand-designed,

manufactured and fabricated to the precise window and door sizes and installed only by Flashman flashing technicians.

The system is rated as Specific Engineered Design and tested several times over four years in the Branz Weathertightness booth in winds and rain up to 180km/h.

This combination of technology and installation by skilled and properly trained Flashman installers eliminates leaks at these vital junctions.

All the responsibility, accountability and the liability for fitting these flashings which assure a weathertight seal in extreme conditions at the window or door junction is taken care of at a price that compares or is better than conventional flashing methods and materials.

The piecemeal on-site construction carried out by many different and varied specialist tradesmen seems to be the way of the future.

Councils are so risk averse they are no longer able to provide on-site advice.

Therefore, work carried out by many specialist trades on site who provide warranties and producer statements on completion of the work seems to be the way of the future.

Whether this is a good or a bad thing is open to question, but I believe it is here to stay.

• For more info: Ph Mike Anticich, 03 327 2272

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

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## Like to make some joinery?

In a tighter market, with fewer new homes to build, you'll likely be doing more small jobs. It'd make sense to stretch them out by doing more of the finishing work yourself - wouldn't it? Good money in it, too.

Kiwi builders like you have been trusting **Scheppach** TKU saws for more than 20 years. By the thousand. Nowadays there are copy-cat imitations out of Asia, but none of them come near to the **German-built original**. Get up close at **Jacks** and you'll see why in a flash.

The TKU is still the perfect site sawbench: compact, powerful and light, yet amazingly strong. But with many new features, it also has all the accuracy you need to make basic joinery.

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# ECNZ certification brings wider choice for consumers

**Label is scientific proof positive, not just market-driven branding**

The new certification by Environmental Choice New Zealand of GreenStuf ceiling insulation pads and blankets brings a wider choice of environmentally-preferable building insulation, according to the ecolabel's general manager Robin Taylor.

Previously there has been only one product range, Tasman Insulation's Pink Batts Ultra, that has qualified for the country's official, government-backed certification.

GreenStuf products are made from thermally bonded polyester fibre by Autex Industries, part of the New Zealand-owned Autex Group, which is the largest polyester insulation manufacturer in Australasia.

According to Autex national sales manager Robert Croot, the insulation offers architects, designers,

developers, builders and home owners a high-performance alternative for residential, commercial and industrial applications.

"GreenStuf thermal insulation is a non-irritant, non-toxic and non-allergenic alternative," he says. There are no chemical binders or retardants added, therefore the products are completely safe — forever."

The two certified products meet stringent specifications for thermal insulation properties that are laid down by Environmental Choice, and they have been laboratory tested for high thermal resistance, Mr Taylor says.

"When it comes to energy savings, thermal performance is obviously critical to the overall environmental impact of insulating materials."

He says the environmental trust's published

specification for building insulation requires the percentage of recycled content to be clearly shown on the packaging, giving consumers factual information to help them in their product choice.

He says this demonstrates the unique objectivity, and proof-based robustness of the government's planet-and-tick ecolabel.

"We don't just ask manufacturers if they recycle. We get them to prove how well they incorporate recycling and whole life-cycle environmental impact assessment into their products."

"Consumers have to know that when we award the Environmental Choice label it is scientific proof positive, and not just a market-driven branding."

In the case of Greenstuf, Mr Croot says that, like all

*Continued page 29*

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# Insulation bonus for home builders

## Additional insulation adding value for new home owners

The new, smarter insulation requirements featured in NZS 4246:2006 will improve energy efficiency, reduce our carbon footprint and bring New Zealand construction standards closer to those of other OECD countries.

In addition, there is a real bonus in this for home builders.

When fully implemented from 30 September 2008, the additional insulation and double glazing required will add about \$5000 to the cost of each of the 20,000-plus new homes built every year.

These conservative numbers add up to additional sales of at least 100 million dollars a year across the housing industry — the equivalent of an extra 362 new homes every year, a welcome boost for a construction industry languishing in falling house consent numbers.

This windfall for builders is a big plus for new home owners too. Unlike the rising compliance costs owners are so familiar with, the requirement for additional insulation adds real value to homes.

Indeed, unlike many optional higher cost products owners may choose to add to their new homes, this additional insulation will pay for itself with the resulting energy savings.

With annual heating bills reduced by approximately \$760 in Auckland and \$1800 in Dunedin, the additional capital investment will be recovered in as little as three years.

In addition, future new home owners, having enjoyed a warmer, healthier home, can expect to see their investment returned again in improved resale prices.

Implementation is already under way, with designers and builders coming to grips with higher R-value wall and ceiling insulation.

Although joiners might moan about the complications of double glazing, they are producing products to the new requirements without delay.

With this smooth transition, all builders have to worry about is minding their backs when they lift into place the weight of all that extra glass and wonder why it wasn't done sooner.

Details of the insulation requirements of NZS 4246:2006 are available from the Department of Building and Housing's web site, [www.dhb.govt.nz/building-index](http://www.dhb.govt.nz/building-index).

You can also get a free copy of *Your Guide to Smarter Insulation* to kick start your collection of this bonus offer.

• For more info: Ph Department of Housing and Building, 04 494 0260

 On the web:  
[www.dbh.govt.nz](http://www.dbh.govt.nz)

## Wider choice

From page 28

Autex Insulation products, it contains previously recycled fibre (from PET plastic), and remains completely recyclable indefinitely.

"Our ECNZ-certified products contain a minimum of 45% previously recycled fibre, and some of our products contain up to 70%. All are manufactured under a zero waste policy where off-cuts and waste are re-processed back into the production process."

The Autex products are backed by a 50-year manufacturer's warranty.

"Autex is committed to sustainability and doing our part to ensure a bright future for New Zealand and our planet," Mr Croot says.

"Environmental Choice certification of our GreenStuf products is an important first step for formal recognition of the environmental standing of our products.

"We are currently working on further developments that will see the Autex stable of ECNZ-certified insulation products extended to provide even greater choice in the coming months," he says.

The recent winter chills are a good reminder of the importance of correct installation of insulation products, Mr Taylor says.

"There are several key aspects that determine the overall environmental impact of thermal insulation, and they include comprehensive installation instructions and informative product labelling, correct handling of the product and correct installation.

"The thermal performance of an insulant can be reduced by 50% even if small (5%) gaps result from installation."

• For more info: Ph Environmental Choice NZ, 09 845 3330

 On the web:  
[www.enviro-choice.org.nz](http://www.enviro-choice.org.nz)

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# Rise to the occasion

**T**he house is up, the paint is almost dry, the backyard is clean, and the place is just about ready for the house warming — or is it?

Many builders will know that vaguely uneasy feeling when all appears to be done, only the picture does not look quite right. And once they figure out what's missing, an hour's work often snowballs into frantic telephone calls and a day's frustration and delay, perhaps even added costs, according to Delta Roofing and Manufacturing managing director Peter Barrett.

Mr Barrett says downpipes, generally regarded as the least of a builder's challenges, sometimes turn out one of their biggest nuisance factors. But it can be avoided.

Hamilton-based Delta Roofing and Manufacturing recently introduced its aluminium extruded Revolutionary Freeflow Ultimate Universal Downpipe to the market.

Mr Barrett explains why the product, currently available from Carters, Placemakers and Metalcraft, is a hassle-free option for any builder.

In the first instance it is a smart operational decision. A downpipe pack consists of a one-piece bent top and soffit section, a flanged bent wall section and two adjustable brackets.

"The use of aluminium extruded pipe and bends for downpipes has a number of distinct advantages over the traditional PVC or sheet metal lock seamed pipe," Mr Barrett says.

"The seamless pipes require no joints, can achieve 180° bends, and present no obstructions to flow, even around the bends. As such, Delta is the only downpipe on the market that currently complies fully with the principles in new building code regulations," he says.

Another advantage is extruded aluminium has a greater wall thickness. This makes it stronger than traditional sheet-metal downpipes so it resists denting better.

"Their life cycle is at least 50 years, and they last three times longer than other types of downpipe — a good embodied energy and future proofing choice," he says.

In the second instance it is a smart business decision.

"The adjustable bracket and flange mean there are no issues between subcontractors about the alignment of the riser and outlet. And when the cladding is up and it's time for assembly, the builder can do it easily himself."

The product needs three cuts with a hacksaw to remove surplus material. The builder then simply pushes the pipes together, seals the joint and fixes the downpipe to the wall.



*Left: RMBF regional services manager, Tauranga region, Bob Bringans fitted his newly-completed home in Tauranga with Delta downpipes.*

*Below: Close up of the Delta Revolutionary Freeflow Ultimate Universal Downpipe.*



The pipes are compatible with all roofing products. They are powder-coated in a choice of seven standard colours, which cuts out painting issues, time and costs.

"When all these are factored in, it's the most cost and time-effective downpipe on the market. The builder saves time by avoiding the hassle of subcontractor fault resolution, and the project saves money in assembling and painting cost.

"So, in addition to its other advantages, the Delta product costs substantially less. The builder can expect a major saving per house lot," he says.

Pakuranga building consultant Stuart Thomson speaks highly of the benefits of using the Delta pipes.

"An added plus for this product must be in its aesthetic appearance," Mr Thompson says. "Unlike plastic downpipes, which look like a drain on a wall, smooth bent aluminium looks 'purpose made'.

"The ultimate test for any product is 'would I use it on my next house?' The answer is definitely yes," he says.

- **For more info:** Ph Delta Roofing and Manufacturing, 07 817 5197

 **On the web:** [www.deltaroofing.co.nz](http://www.deltaroofing.co.nz)

## Tarpaulins for hire delivered to your site!

**C**over Systems has launched a new "Hire Tarp" service to its already extensive protective cover range.

Due to popular demand, you can now either buy the tarps or have the option to hire them as long as required. Hiring is painless and convenient.

Customers only pay for the tarps when in use, so why spend extra cash on purchasing when you can have a cover delivered and collected on site for a specific job?

The tarps are built to last the rigours of any construction, and will provide a secure on-site cover protecting any type of construction.

There are three sizes available, ranging from 6 x 6m up to 12 x 9m, all with tough, durable rope tie-downs.

It is far more economical to have your tarp delivered on site and collected rather than to try and store it and outlay the large amounts of money involved in owning a tarp.



Managing director Sam Paterson says the company's aim is to provide a fast, efficient, quality tarp hire service to builders.

"We understand the importance of quality protection, allowing assurance to builders that their project and employees are protected," Mr Paterson says.

- **For more info:** Ph Cover Systems, 09 376 2655

 **On the web:** [www.coversystems.co.nz](http://www.coversystems.co.nz)

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# Tomorrow's Showhomes a hit with consumers

**E**ighty per cent of people who are building or renovating visit showhomes to gather information about who they want to build with and what features they wish to incorporate into their project.

So for a builder or product supplier, a showhome is the most powerful way of advertising their business.

A key part of the Future-Proof Building message to consumers is the Tomorrow's Showhome programme, an innovative series of houses built using the concepts of Future-Proof Building.

In 2007, Tomorrow's Showhomes showcased the Future-Proof Building message in Auckland, Tauranga, Taupo, Nelson, Christchurch and North Shore, these six showhomes attracting 50,000 consumers over a 12-month period.

This unprecedented level of interest generated massive benefits to the builders and product suppliers involved in the programme.

The idea is simple — take a builder's showhome and turn it into an educational tool, demonstrating to the public how to Future-Proof their home — the result being better homes, better margins and more business.

In 2008 the Tomorrow's Showhome programme will produce houses in Taranaki, Christchurch, Ashburton, Wellington and Auckland, partnering with different builders around the country to share the benefits of the programme with a variety of Carters builders.

The success of the programme lies with a marketing programme, using television, billboards, radio and print media. This level of marketing exposure is only possible due to the unique structure of the programme and the investment made by Future-Proof Building partners.

Once in the home, the consumer's experience is different to any standard showhome. Cut-aways demonstrate how the home is put together, and signage indicates the Future-Proof benefits of various products throughout the house.

Once the visitors have given their details they are handed a magazine outlining the programme, with editorial information about Future-Proof Building and the various products in the home.

The idea of the experience is to provide people with the tools and knowledge they need to produce a superior home, and to give Future-Proof partners the information to be best placed to provide a solution for that customer.

The Tomorrow's Showhome programme is always looking for new locations and partners, so to register interest in partnering in a Tomorrow's Showhome, call Ian Watt on 0508 FUTURE.

• For more info: Ph CMS Group, 09 589 2050, or 0508 FUTURE

On the web:  
[www.fpb.co.nz](http://www.fpb.co.nz)

## Roadshow rolls on

**T**he annual Future-Proof Building national roadshows have been expanded to cover the whole of New Zealand annually, with the event attracting more than 3000 people to 11 events nationally last year.

This year the focus is on Energy Efficiency, with the keynote speaker from Eeca explaining the Home Energy Rating Scheme (HERS) and other initiatives that make up the Energywise consumer campaign.

In addition, there will also be an update on the effect that changes to H1 have had on the industry, and an insight into how Future-Proof Building is growing and influencing consumers' building decisions.

To ensure consumers across the country are able to access information on FPB, the National Bank is sponsoring a series of How to Future-Proof Your Home seminars at each centre the night before the industry breakfast.

The Future-Proof Building roadshow seminars are a must for anyone who wants to be competitive in a down market.

To book your place at the breakfast, email [kim.forrest@cms.co.nz](mailto:kim.forrest@cms.co.nz), or phone 0508 FUTURE, quoting which breakfast you wish to attend.

**Remaining Future-Proof Building national roadshow dates are:**

**Tuesday 2 September: Rotorua Racecourse, Rotorua**

**Wednesday 3 September: Great Lakes Centre, Taupo**

**Thursday 4 September: Napier War Memorial Centre, Napier**

**Tuesday 7 October: Addington Events Centre, Christchurch**

**Wednesday 8 October: Scenic Circle Marlborough**

**Convention Centre, Blenheim**

**Thursday 9 October: Annesbrook Community Centre, Nelson**

**Tuesday 4 November: Rydges Hotel Lakeland, Queenstown**

**Wednesday 5 November: Ascot Park Hotel, Invercargill**

**Thursday 6 November: Dunedin Convention Centre, Dunedin**

# Future-Proof your frames and trusses

**A**s you may be aware, the Future-Proof Building Roadshow series is working its way around the country, bought to you by Construction Marketing Services.

Carters is proud to promote these roadshows to their customers and to be involved with a stand in the partner area promoting its frame and truss solutions. So how do Carters frames and trusses build a better home to live in now, and in the future?

**Energy Efficiency:** As the cost of energy continues to rise, future-proofing homes is critical. Timber acts as an insulator, reducing heat transfer, so it keeps the heat in the house during winter and out of the house in summer.

Carters' frame and truss solutions also allow for the design of an energy-efficient home. Carters designs and manufactures frame and truss solutions that provide structural support for solar water heating equipment, or use roof space to provide attic storage, or even maximise living space within the home through space management.

**Quality Assurance:** By using products such as Laserframe, hy90 and hyONE LVL (laminated veneer lumber), Carters ensures its frames not only meet the standards required for strength and timber treatment, but they are also kiln dried and, in the case of LVL, are an engineered wood product providing greater stability.

All frames and trusses are manufactured in accordance with the practices of New Zealand Standard NZS3604:1999 Timber Framed Buildings.

**Resource Responsibility:** In a world facing dwindling resources, atmospheric pollution and global warming, wood represents one of the most renewable raw materials. Forests and wood help the environment by combating climate change. They store carbon which would otherwise be released into the atmosphere.

New forests on non-forested land act as carbon sinks, and wood products and timber are themselves CO<sub>2</sub> reservoirs. Plantation forests are also a sustainable



and responsible land-use. They enhance the quality of air, soil and water compared to other land uses that produce raw materials.

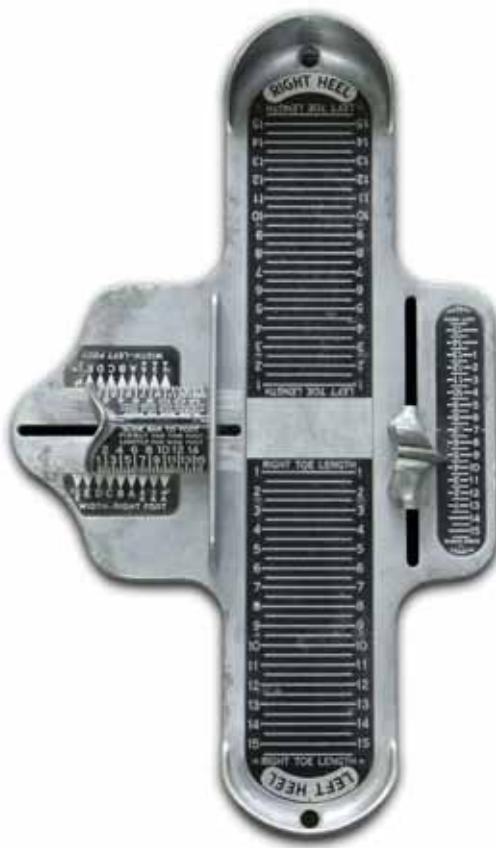
Manufacturing of wood products requires much less energy than most other building materials, and this reduces the need to burn fossil fuels to supply the extra energy.

Carters' highly skilled staff use the latest technology to deliver the best possible job. They operate a dedicated CAD-CAM computer software programme for engineering, detailing and design, and a computerised

tracking process that provides daily progress reports, computerised saws, state-of-the-art nailing machines and multi-head truss presses.

Future-Proof Building is a great tool to help businesses stand out from the crowd, particularly in the current market. To learn more about Future-Proof Building and to hear from the likes of EECA and the RMBF, then go to an FPB Roadshow when it comes to your area.

Call 0508 FUTURE for more information or to RSVP for these roadshows.



## Find the Perfect Fit

If you're looking for the right person to help you out onsite, advertise your apprenticeship vacancy

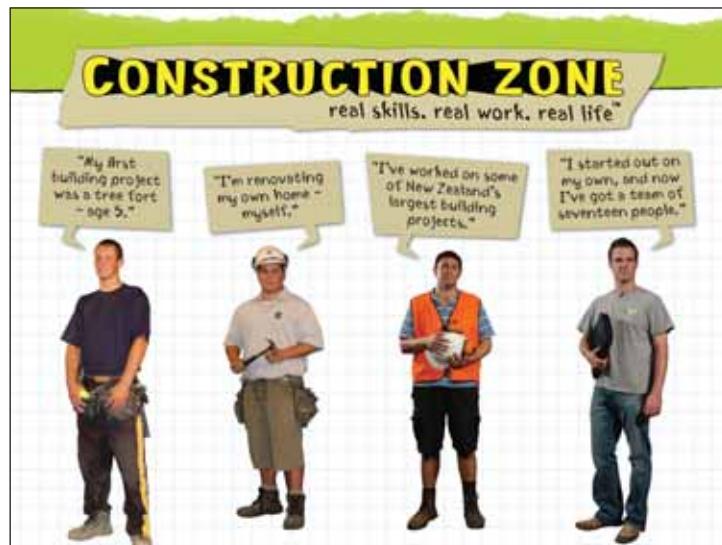
**FREE**  
on BCITO Career Launcher.

It's the online tool that connects employers in the building and construction industry with some of the keenest aspiring apprentices in the country.



Visit [www.bcito.org.nz](http://www.bcito.org.nz)  
and click on Career Launcher for details.

# Get real!



New Zealand's aspiring building apprentices now have the chance to hear what life in the construction industry is really like, online at [www.constructionzone.co.nz](http://www.constructionzone.co.nz).

Hear real people share their experiences and advice about life on and off building sites on the BCITO's new interactive tool called Real Stories.

The Real Stories video profiles give a real life perspective of jobs in the construction industry — what it's like day to day on-site, what it takes to be a success, the opportunities available and the lifestyles a career in construction can support.

An interactive career pathway supports each profile so viewers can see the different routes into the industry and the multitude of career opportunities available.

There are four video clips profiling a BCITO carpentry apprentice in the first year of his apprenticeship, a recently qualified apprentice, the owner of a residential building company and a site manager for a commercial construction company.

Each profile presents personal experiences and unique views of a career in the construction industry.

The BCITO found that people often venture down a career path without having a clear idea of what it's really like to work in that particular job or the different types of opportunities that might be available.

Real Stories will help make this picture clearer for anyone interested in construction careers.

"We know the questions and concerns parents have are very different from the ones their young people have about careers and apprenticeships," BCITO chief executive Ruma Karaitiana says.

"For instance, school leavers often want to know how early they might have to start work and the types of tasks they'll be doing from day to day, whereas parents and teachers are more interested in long-term career prospects and qualifications. Real Stories aims to answer those questions," he says.

Anyone who is thinking about pursuing a career in the construction industry should check out Real Stories online at [www.constructionzone.co.nz](http://www.constructionzone.co.nz).

- For more info: Ph BCITO, 0800 4 22486

On the web:  
[www.constructionzone.co.nz](http://www.constructionzone.co.nz)

# Myths, myths . . . and more myths

**T**

The construction industry is a haven for myths surrounding workplace health and safety — “she’ll be right, it’ll only take a minute”, “you’ll be fine, we’ve always done it that way”, “don’t worry, working at height without fall protection is really safe” — along with many others.

Site Safe is again delighted to be hosting the 2008 “MythBusting” Safety Conference being held at the Ellerslie Convention Centre in Greenlane, Auckland, on Thursday, 25 September 2008.

Seven thought-provoking topics will be on the agenda that speakers from within government, industry and Site Safe will dispel.

Myths on the board include:

- Marketing your business and safety performance can’t be good for your business.
- Clients have no responsibility and gain no benefit from the safety of contractors.
- Health and safety are equal partners.
- There’s no risk of injury from falls under three metres.
- Training and PPE always protects you when working at height.
- Safety is a cost to the organisation.
- Safety performance starts and ends at the coal face.

There will be humour, some possible controversy and, without doubt, lots of valuable information to take away.

**Registration fee for the one-day conference:**

*Per person*

**Site Safe Member** \$175

**Non-Site Safe Member** \$225

*(Prices include GST)*

There’ll be time over morning tea and lunch to meet up with mates and industry contacts to discuss the myths that you see as prevalent in the industry.

This conference is for everyone in the construction industry — from the guys on the tools through to chief executives.

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Safety affects everyone in the industry, and this event will give you valuable food for thought on how to approach and manage safety in the future.

#### ***Outline of timing for the day:***

<b>7.30am - 8.30am</b>	<b>Registration</b>
<b>8.30am</b>	<b>Welcome and official opening</b>
<b>3.30pm</b>	<b>Conference concludes , refreshments available</b>
<b>4pm</b>	<b>End of day</b>

To register your attendance, visit the Site Safe web site at [www.sitesafe.org.nz](http://www.sitesafe.org.nz) to download the registration form, fax 04 499 2508, email [conference@sitesafe.org.nz](mailto:conference@sitesafe.org.nz), or phone 04 494 8334 to book your places.

- **For more info: Ph Site Safe, 04 494 8334**

 **On the web:**  
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# Unravelling mysterious Chankillo

Dr Kerry Rodgers catches up with some ancient Andean ruins courtesy of some space-age technology.

**T**ucked away in the Peruvian Andes, some 400km north of Lima, is a large, 2300-year-old ancient ruin named Chankillo.

A plan view of the concentric and seemingly-fortified walls of the central complex is not unlike some electric razors, and archaeologists have dubbed the site "Norelco" — the United States equivalent of Philips.

Until last year, no one had figured out what it was a ruin of. Its location on a hill and its thick walls suggested it had been a fort.

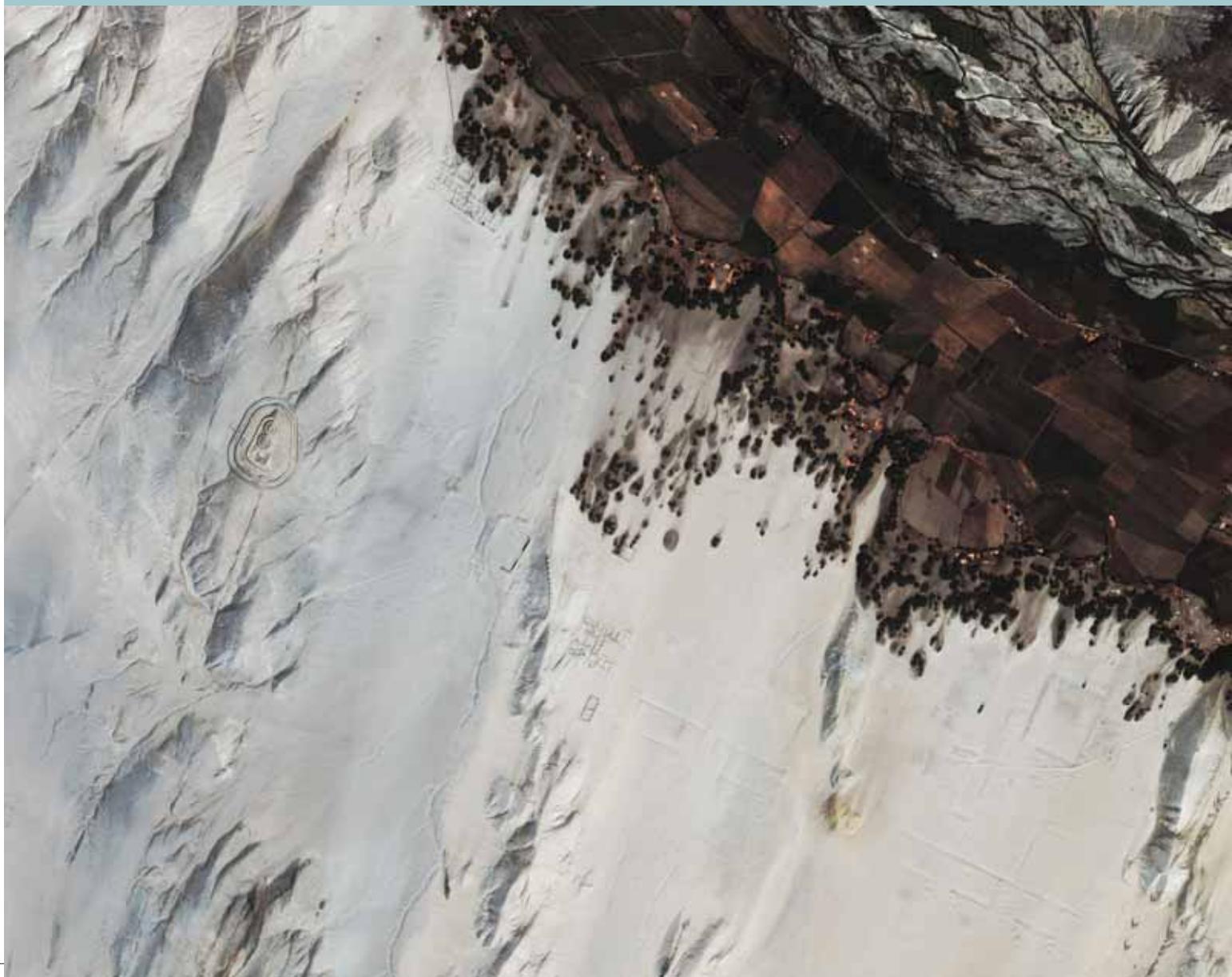
However, the walls are pierced by numerous gates, it lacks a defendable water source, and it appears to have no strategic value.

Then on 13 January 2002, the IKONOS sensor of the GeoEye satellite captured a fabulous image of the site.

The detail this shows has allowed a team working out of Leicester and Yale universities, Ivan Ghezzi and Clive Ruggles, to explain at least part of the site.

South-east of the central Norleco complex are 13 low towers. These straddle a ridge, resembling a curved spine. They are regularly spaced along the hilltop, from 2m to 6m high, and 4.7m to 5.1m apart.

Each tower has a pair of staircases on their north and south sides that lead to the top. They are surrounded by fortifications, including thick walls with gates and parapets.





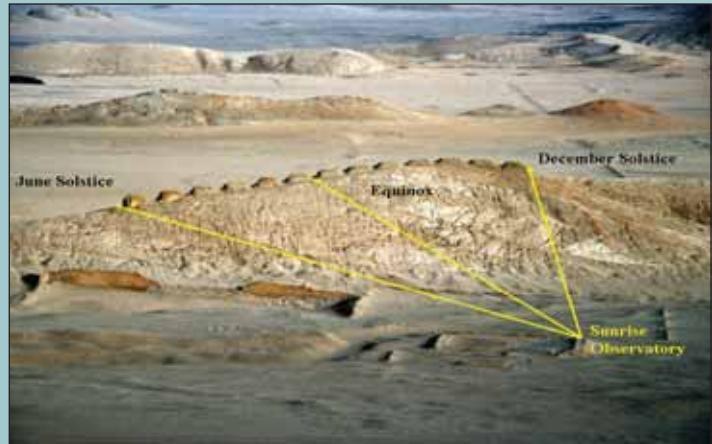
The towers can be easily seen from the Norelco ruins, 200m to the west where, along with the double courtyard and 40m-long exterior corridor, there is an observation point. Archaeologists have found pottery and other materials here that would seem to have been brought as offerings by those viewing the towers.

However, it is the view from the two groups of derelict ruins on either side of the towers that has proved quite illuminating in more ways than one.

Ghezzi and Ruggles believe these ruins were observation posts. From them the end-most towers line up with the sunrise and sunset of the winter and summer solstices. Other solar events, such as the sunrise and sunset of the equinoxes, align with other towers as viewed from the observation points.

Chankillo then, is remarkable not only as the earliest known complete solar observatory in the Americas, but it defines all major aspects of the solar year. As a calendar it is accurate to within a few days throughout the year.

Ghezzi and Ruggles believe the entire site is some type of fortified ceremonial centre, perhaps a temple. We know the Incas were making careful solar observations by 1500 AD.



The 13 towers, presumably then, indicate much earlier sophisticated sun cults, circa 400 BC. Not only do the ruins predate European arrival by 1800 years but they precede, by some 500 years, similar monuments built by the Mayans in Central America.

Other ancient solar observatories have often been interpreted as providing information as to times to plant and times to harvest. My experience as a country boy tells me any farmer — or peasant for that matter — knows when to sow and reap without the need for a vast pile of stones or a priestly hierarchy.

Less ancient historic observatories in other cultures are known to have been linked to sacrifice (usually human) or as a means of defining the optimum times for the resident tribal leader, be they emperor or empress, to have sex.

The South American kings regarded themselves as offspring of the sun, and political implications can be read in Chankillo. It makes a statement of how society was organised, as to who had power, and who did not.

Those who controlled the site effectively controlled the sun. Not unlike the Beehive, really.



# Unit owners claim leaky building success

**Tim Bates** of Auckland law firm Legal Vision summarises some important principles that have come out of the latest leaky building claim to be decided in the High Court.



This High Court case — another multi-unit leaky building claim by Body Corporate No. 189855 and Others v North Shore City Council and Others — concerned 12 residential units at 45 Byron Avenue, Takapuna, which suffered from water ingress.

The claim was brought by the Body Corporate and the owners of 12 of the 14 units. The defendants included the council, the individual developer/architect, an individual from the construction company, the building expert advising on original repairs, his company, the project manager and the plasterer.

The findings to come from this judgment are as follows:

- The court rejected the council's argument that the existence of a duty being owed by the council to unit owners would differ from unit to unit, depending on whether the unit (which, in each case, was residential) was bought for personal occupation.

The court followed the Sunset Terraces decision and held that a duty will be owed by the council where the intended use of the unit is residential.

- The court held that the unit owners do not need to

show a specific reliance upon the council. Instead, it held that only a general reliance is required, being a community reliance upon the work of the council.

It was held that the council owed a duty of care to the purchasers and subsequent owners of 45 Byron Avenue in issuing the consent, inspecting the project during the construction process and when determining whether to issue a code compliance certificate.

- The court held that whilst a duty is not owed to the Body Corporate per se, a duty is owed to all the unit owners of the common property.

The Body Corporate provides an administrative convenience such that it can expressly sue for damage to common property on behalf of the unit owners.

The Body Corporate's claim for damage to common property is only as good as each claim of each individual unit owner against the relevant defendants.

- The issuing of practical completion certificates were not causative of any loss — rather the cause of loss was the defective design and, later, negligent inspection by the council.

- As at March 2002, a purchaser of a recently built building could not be said to have been contributorily negligent by failing to insert a condition

requiring a professional report or, for that matter, by failing to obtain a pre-purchase building report.

- A failure to make an agreement for sale and purchase conditional upon a CCC being issued does not amount to contributory negligence.

- Where a unit owner is made aware of a levy for significant building levies prior to purchase, that ought to have instigated in the purchaser a chain of inquiry.

His failure to make inquiries re the status of his unit having been put on notice, amounted to contributory negligence and reduced his claim against the defendants by 25%.

However, it was not enough for the court to hold that

he purchased with actual knowledge of the defects or that he acted with such disregard for his own interests so as to make his conduct the sole cause of damage which he suffered.

- Where a unit owner transfers her property into a family trust knowing that there had been building problems that had been fixed, it amounted to contributory negligence on behalf of the trust.

It was held that the trustees had acted with disregard for the interests of the trust by failing to take any steps at all to enquire into or protect their position when they knew the building had defects and the council had refused to issue a code compliance certificate. This claim was reduced by 25%.

- Where a unit owner is aware that repair work has been completed and that further work is needed to get a CCC, but still transfers the unit into a related company, it makes that company contributorily negligent for its loss. This claim was reduced by 25%.

- Each unit owner was entitled to \$20,000 general damages where they occupied their unit. That award was reduced to \$12,500 where the units were rented.

In the event that the units were co-owned then the award was to be shared between the owners.

This decision must be considered as a really good win for the unit owners and would, no doubt, be of significant concern to councils around New Zealand.

In his final paragraph, the judge makes the point that although councils are routinely apportioned 10-25% liability in construction defects cases, the insolvency of others more directly responsible for the defects, such as

developers, building companies and, in some instances, architects, means that the burden of meeting all the judgment may fall upon councils.

• For more info: Ph Tim Bates, 09 360 2415

 On the web:  
[www.legalvision.co.nz](http://www.legalvision.co.nz)



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Take part in this month's poll: We're asking our web visitors:  
Do you think statutory insurance is the answer to avoiding  
"leaky buildings-type" legal battles? (See story, pages 22 - 23)

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James Hardie



**Terms and Conditions** 1. The promotion opens 1st August 2008 and closes 30th September 2008. 2. Winner will be drawn on 8th October 2008. 3. Entrants must be 18 years or older at time of entry for their entry to be valid. 4. Prize draw entry requires the purchase of James Hardie Linea™ Weatherboard or Axon™ Panel (together the "products") from any Carters store at any time during the months of August and September 2008. Entry is automatic for Account Holders. Cash buyers will need to fill out an entry form at the purchase location and attach a copy of their invoice to the form and place in the entry box provided to gain entry. Only one entry per invoice number. Each entry must have a separate invoice number. All entry forms must be placed in the entry boxes no later than 5.00pm on 30th September 2008 to be eligible for the draw. 5. All accounts of entrant must be within operating (payment) terms at time of entry and when winner is drawn for entry to be valid. Cash purchases must be received in full in cleared funds at time of draw for entry to be valid. 6. Carters reserves the right to validate and check the authenticity of any entry or prize claim before awarding a prize. 7. If products for which entries have been made are then returned to the vendor for a refund or credit this may, in the absolute discretion of the promoter, result in invalidation of all of an entrant's entries and forfeiture of any right to a prize. 8. The prize is a Mitsubishi Triton GLX 2WD Diesel Double Cab Wellside - Manual Ute, in cool silver colour, includes registration and all compulsory on road costs. 9. Prize is not transferable and cannot be exchanged for cash. 10. The draw is conducted by Carters by way of random selection. The prize draw decision is final and no correspondence will be entered into. 11. Winners will be notified by telephone or in writing using the details provided in their entry form or their account details. If a winner cannot be contacted after reasonable attempts by Carters a new winner will be drawn. 12. By accepting the prize Mitsubishi Motors NZ Ltd, (and/or) Carter Holt Harvey Ltd and James Hardie New Zealand Ltd reserve the right to publicise your name, photo and city or town of residence for future promotional purposes. 13. Mitsubishi Motors NZ Ltd and/or Carter Holt Harvey Ltd and James Hardie New Zealand Ltd reserves the right to contact you regarding any future offers or promotions unless stated otherwise. 14. Employees (and their families) of Carter Holt Harvey Ltd and James Hardie New Zealand Ltd and their contractors associated with this promotion are not eligible to enter the prize draw.

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