



building today

THE OFFICIAL MAGAZINE OF THE REGISTERED MASTER BUILDERS FEDERATION

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**2010 RMBF
Conference**



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Win a Navman C40 worth \$199! See page 23

building today

Announcements made in this year's Budget on May 20 will go a long way to clearing up the uncertainties that currently exist for property investors — and the construction industry as a whole.

Milestone Homes' general manager Stephen Murray asks that the Government provide some clarity on the issue of property investment taxation.

He says a lack of direction about these changes has damaged confidence in the market, and contributed significantly to a dramatic fall in the number of building consents in the early part of this year.

Read what else he has to say, and a wrap of the RMBF's 2010 Conference in Napier last month.

Andrew Darlington
Editor



Tyrone Parson, winner of a BCITO Specialist Trades Outward Bound Scholarship, is still reaping the benefits of his experience.

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chief's chat

by ceo warwick quinn

Hawkes Bay turns it on at conference

Well the Registered Master Builders Federation conference is over for another year and what a resounding success it was.

I would personally like to thank all the sponsors and speakers for their support and contribution, and the Hawkes Bay Registered Master Builders Association for hosting it, and for their input and generosity.

We changed the format this year to make the topics and sessions more work and business focused, and those that attended, I am sure, left with more knowledge than when they arrived — and that is the outcome we wanted to achieve.

Next year we will be conferencing in Auckland, and will be working hard to improve again on this year's effort.

Submissions on the Building Act Review discussion document have now closed. I hope many of you took the time to submit your views. The RMBF certainly did, and if you want to see what we think have a look



online in the member's section of our web site.

We agree with many of the proposals, but have some pretty strong views on the role and liability of the principal contractor and the positioning of home warranties.

These are important times in the construction sector, and the decisions the Government makes have the potential to change the landscape dramatically over the next year or so.

Weather-tightness resolution is something that is high on everyone's agenda. The Minister is hopeful of a funding solution (that may get announced in the Budget), and that will be great.

However, we are concerned with the implementation of the remedial fix-ups, the subsequent and potential ongoing liabilities of builders, and ensuring the repairs are the right repairs, so that we are not over or under-specifying the work. The country cannot afford to over-repair, and as the Minister of Finance keeps telling

everyone, he is borrowing \$250m a week as it is.

Remedial work is likely to take many years, and we do not want to be in the same position in five years' time with ongoing leaks and problems. We have to fix these homes once and for all, and get this very sorry chapter in our construction history behind us.

On a different note, we are delighted that we have maintained a similar number of entries in the Registered Master Builders House of the Year in association with PlaceMakers for 2010 as we did for 2009.

This is the 20-year anniversary of the event, and with the very tough economic conditions last year we could have expected quite a drop. This shows the value of the event and the branding/market opportunity it provides our members, as it is a unique point of differentiation in the market (a key "positioning" strategy, if you read all the gurus on business).

While House of the Year entries have now closed, Apprentice of the Year in association with Carters entries have opened.

This event continues to gain momentum, and we are hoping for another record number of entries this year.

This is the showcase for the future of our industry, and an opportunity for all apprentices to set themselves apart from the pack and to pit their skills against their peers. It is a fantastic experience, and all the apprentices that I speak with cannot talk highly enough about it. So get into it!

I would like to close this note with a thank you to our outgoing president. Brent Mettrick was the president when I started in late 2008, and presided over the worst building conditions in 60 years.

He was an immense help to me, and he has worked tirelessly and selflessly for this organisation, not only during his term as president but for many years before that. I thank Brent for all his work and know, while he is no longer president, he will continue to be an active and valuable contributor to this business. Best wishes to you Brent.

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Leaky building remediation — issues to consider

By RMBF in-house counsel
Leoni Carter



The industry is waiting with bated breath the soon-to-be-announced new package from the Government on dealing with the leaky building crisis.

The focus of most commentators will be how, and in what proportion, the Government, the councils and the home owners fund the multi-million dollar remediation of existing leaky homes.

For builders, the issue of liability will also be crucial. The previous proposal required only that the home owner did not sue the council, leaving everyone else still "in the gun".

Taking on a leaky building remediation is like stepping into a minefield — you never know when one will blow up in your face. When your best efforts as a building professional fail to fix the problem, you will then be liable for it, even if it wasn't yours in the first place.

There is a lot of suspicion and reluctance in the industry to tackle these fixes. Everyone knows that once you step onto a building site you attract liability.

The RMBF has put together a team that will be watching with interest what the Government comes up with, and will be working to ensure that the liability issue is addressed, such that members can take on these jobs with the confidence of knowing they will not be blamed for making an honest attempt to fix a systemic problem.

Part of the Government's package has to be to "draw a line under" the problem with existing buildings so that all parties can move on.

Whether you should be involved in remedial work must be considered on a case-by-case basis. Remediation is

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Building his interest

Joe Dobson, winner of the Registered Master Builders 2008 Apprentice of the Year in association with Carters, has recently returned from the National Tradesman's Expo in Australia — a business-to-business exhibition specifically dedicated to tradesmen, contractors, subcontractors, owner-operators and serious DIY handymen.

As part of winning the national Apprentice of the Year competition, Joe was given the opportunity to attend a trade show of his choice.

We had a chat to Joe about why he selected Australia's National Tradesman's Expo, and why he believes it will be of interest to others in the construction industry.



Joe Dobson at the Registered Master Builders 2008 Apprentice of the Year, in association with Carters. Below: At the Tradesman's Expo in Australia.



Q: What impressed you most about the trade show?

A: Having access to see a number of products and different technologies that are not available or marketed in New Zealand. It was also interesting to see the major American influence throughout the show.

Q: What key skills or products were shown at the show, and how will that help you as a builder?

A: Not so much the skills and products, but the knowledge that our industry is constantly changing and improving. To be at the top of your game you have to be up to date and open to new ideas, and aware of new technologies.

Q: What is the value in attending a trade show as part of the national prize?

A: Attending a trade show is a really valuable experience. It gives you the opportunity to see what's new in the market place and opens your eyes to a range of products and solutions. It makes you realise that New Zealand is just a village compared to the rest of the world. Make sure you do it!

Q: Did you get a glimpse of tools and practices not yet introduced to New Zealand?

A: Sure did. Portable compacting and screed machines,

drill adapters for cutting fibre cement sheets and iron, sugar-based concrete dissolvers, van storage systems, new laser technologies, sketching pads that draw straight lines freehand — there was plenty of really cool stuff.

Q: How do you think New Zealand builders would benefit from any of these new initiatives?

A: I think the most tangible benefit builders would gain is saving time in construction methods through new technologies and systems, and producing a higher quality of finished work, which would be perceived as more professional by most clients.

Q: Is there anything else you would like to add?

A: Thank you to the people that make this competition possible and for giving me this opportunity to extend myself. It has been a great chance to be an ambassador for the industry and a delight to share this experience with others.

• The 2010 Apprentice of the Year entries are open now. Track the progress of the competition at the RMB Carters Apprentice of the Year Facebook page at www.facebook.com, or download an entry form from www.masterbuilder.org.nz.

Looking back

By RMBF past president
Brent Mettrick

Two years have flown by, and it's difficult to look back when the focus for those past two years has been only forward.

I said in the beginning that I was up for the presidency, and remember hearing about the 60-plus days per year Ashley Hartley spent on RMBF and industry business and thinking that it was a lot. In hindsight, I have not done any less.

Recession

This has been one of the main topics of my tenure. Over this time we've had some members go out of business and, for those who think the recession is over, I suggest you think again.

Consents are still at a 45-year low, bank lending has declined in the past three months, real estate sales are at a multi-year low and home affordability has not been addressed.

Compliance costs are still higher this year than they were last year and the year before that. Tax and GST indications have destabilised what market there was. Personally, I am not convinced this recession has run out of steam, so act prudently, grab each deal, present and service.

Master Build Services (MBS)

The launching of the new 10 Year Guarantee was a huge piece of work for the team. Geoff, Tali and the team are working in an efficient and effective way to ensure their internal processes provide superior customer service. The MBS board has done well to steer this ship through the recent turbulence to safe harbours.

Licensing

It's finally made the grade. This has been a long process — some would say over 100 years! Building and Construction Minister Maurice Williamson, with mighty early help from Ashley Hartley, has finally pulled this through.

There has been some simplification and modification of the fees but, otherwise, the recognition our members have been waiting for in the form of licensing has

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arrived. I can recommend members to now sign up for your licence.

Compliance costs and consenting time

As I write this, there is no evidence this has lessened — yet! I am convinced that with the current work streams on sector productivity, the Building Act Review, multi-use consenting and the recently released starter home solutions, the issues are being addressed.

As an industry we have been victim to unfair inefficiency and bureaucracy that we have had to pass to our clients. The RMBF has responded with a submission to the review, and I hope you took the opportunity to do so as well.

House of the Year and Apprentice of the Year

Each year I have attended a number of each of these events. House of the Year is one of the best awards programmes in any industry, and with the 20th anniversary this year it exemplifies what it is to be a Registered Master Builder.

The Apprentice of the Year is one of the most rewarding events to attend. It showcases good training, proud parents and employers, and the star of the show — the apprentice.

These young people will be our future, and this event and the entrants truly demonstrate that our future is in good hands.

Structural review

Last year we restructured our membership categories so we are better placed to offer real value to the

different types of builders/businesses that make up our network.

Warwick and the team have done well to finalise this process, and the next step is promoting the current benefits and developing new ones that define our market-leading position as Registered Master Builders.

Home affordability

We as an industry have not addressed the home affordability issue — that is, it takes nearly six times the average wage to buy a median home, whereas elsewhere it is three times.

Interest is still too high, wages too low and land too expensive (roll on the RMA reforms)! There are too many individual home designs — we need to create standardised components to provide a better result for our consumers.

Green building

Green building in the residential sector is starting to become commonplace. Green building tends to be a justifier rather than an initiator of a new home purchase. That said, there is a real case to combine eco and affordability to work not with the sale price but with whole of life benefits and costs.

Political stability

I would like to congratulate the Minister on being the first to have lasted more than a year in the job and, furthermore, for the courage to address the larger issues, eg, the Building Act Review.

Mr Williamson truly cares about this industry and, as an organisation, we have enjoyed working with the DBH and him to address the issues within the sector.

The RMBF is in a good place, in good hands and with a large agenda in place. As I stand down as president, I will remain a proud Registered Master Builder.

I would like to offer my sincere thanks to the Canterbury RMBA for their ongoing support, and the boards and staff of the RMBF for their dedication and belief and passion for our industry.

A special thanks to Tracey Bree for the hassle involved in getting these articles written, and then the crafting to make them readable, and Larissa Garnett for organising endless and unflinching travel arrangements.

Finally, no builders article would be complete without a "Thanks to the Wife". Sue has been great, and an advocate of the presidency. We have enjoyed the journey and look forward to the years ahead in building.

Conference focuses on education

The RMBF's 110th annual conference took place in the Hawkes Bay recently, based at the Napier War Memorial Conference Centre on Marine Parade.

Delegates were treated to great speakers and workshops, as well as the social events taking in the flavour of local surroundings.

The conference was opened by RMBF president Brent Mettrick, followed by Minister for Building and Construction Maurice Williamson.

The conference this year focused more on education, from finding out "what we're worth" with Paul Lawrence from the New South Wales Master Builders Association, to how Fletcher Building Ltd managed its way through the economic downturn.

The workshops covered a number of interesting subjects including:

- what to do when faced with a leaky building claim,
- the CCA,
- project planning,
- succession planning, and
- growing your business and remaining profitable.

The RMBF was also very pleased to announce a Life Membership Award to Bob Lockwood of the Manawatu Association.

This year's social functions stepped up yet again, with the fantastic ITM Welcome function at The Old Church, the PlaceMakers Charity Auction raising \$36,000 for the Cranford Hospice and the Carters Gala Dinner at the Opera House in Hastings.

Once again the conference was a great success. Many thanks go to everyone involved in bringing this event



together and, in particular, the Hawkes Bay Association for hosting.

2011 sees the conference heading to the big smoke in

Auckland. There are some exciting changes in store for next year – they're still in development stage so look out for more info about this soon.

Leaky buildings

From page 5

now recognised as a specialist area in itself, and many builders have already set themselves up as experts in this space.

If a funding package is available, then it is likely that more builders will want a piece of that work.

However, there are ways to limit your exposure. If the remediation proposal has been designed by a professional, and you work under the supervision of that professional and build only to the design, then you should be able to avoid liability.

It is worth considering getting an indemnity from the design professional, although this may be like pulling teeth!

A major problem with leaky homes is how difficult it is

to assess the extent of the damage. Often it comes to light only when the job has started. For this reason any leaky job should ideally be done on a charge-up basis.

Despite the fact that home owners themselves often don't know the extent of the damage, they will expect fixed-price certainty from you — another good reason to ensure adequate testing has been carried out and detailed drawings and a scope of works has been prepared before you enter into a contract.

If you become involved in remediation, no matter how detailed the documentation is that is given to you, you should ensure that everything you do is documented ruthlessly, including taking photos every step of the way. A picture really is worth a thousand words.

Other factors to consider as to whether you really want to get involved in remediation include:

- Did you build the property in the first instance? If you

are likely to be drawn into the remediation process anyway, via litigation, then you may be motivated to be proactive.

- Any work you do will start the clock again in terms of the 10-year limitation provisions of the Building Act 2004.
- If you tout yourself as able to design the solution, are you willing to "gear up" with the best equipment in order to meet the market expectation for analysing homes, eg, thermal imaging?
- Be prepared to stand firm on quality in the repair process. Quick fixes may leak again.

Watch this space, as the RMBF will be continuing to roll out advice and guidelines on how builders can be part of the solution without sacrificing themselves or their business in the process.

From amateur to expert

Building started out as a hobby for Paul Richards, owner of Ezebuild and Contemporary Homes, but it has since become his passion.

His recent building accolade is testament to this. Mr Richards won the PlaceMakers Renovation over \$500,000 category, and the PlaceMakers Bathroom Excellence Award in the Registered Master Builders 2009 House of the Year, in association with PlaceMakers.

However, Nelson-based Mr Richards readily admits building was not his first career choice. He started out with a New Zealand Certificate of Mechanical Engineering, but changed tack after purchasing his first house.

"I bought a house, decided that I could renovate it myself, and it all went from there," Mr Richards says.

"After about 15 years I set up my own project management business, Ezebuild, in 2007. I later started Contemporary Homes as a construction company."

Mr Richards' work on the winning property, the renovation of a 1950s house in Nelson, began when a client came through one of his show homes.

"The clients liked what they saw and asked me to renovate their house."

The house was propped up on a hill in Venture Cove in Nelson, and it was in dire need of attention. Mr Richards and his team were asked to take the 1950s house "that really had nothing going for it" and turn it into a modern and contemporary beach house with soul and character.

"When you have a client in front of you, you've got to take their dreams for the property and put it down on paper," Mr Richards says.

His team faced a considerable challenge when the clients asked for a basement to be built under the existing floor.

Piles underneath the house had to be removed so that the ground underneath could be excavated. The house was literally up in the air as Mr Richards and his team worked underneath to create a new level.

The multi-level home now features four

bedrooms, five bathrooms and two living rooms. The water and the golden sandy beach situated below the property inspired the styling at the entrance and living areas, creating a stunning home that's well suited to its environment.

Judges praised the team's efforts on a very complicated renovation project.

"The degree of difficulty for the builder was extreme, with concave and convex walls perfectly and consistently executed throughout — from the foundation to the roof — delivering a result that's magical," judges said.

Mr Richards claims his company's main point of difference is the ability to take a project from the design phase right through to completion.

"A lot of other builders don't get involved in the design process, but I like to be involved right from the drawing stage, through to handing over the keys."



This entry by Ezebuild, Nelson, won the PlaceMakers Renovation over \$500,000 and PlaceMakers Bathroom Excellence Awards in the Registered Master Builders 2009 House of the Year, in association with PlaceMakers.



National first

Richard Fairbairn, owner and operator of Wanaka-based David Reid Homes (Central) Ltd, was thrilled to take out his company's first national award in the Registered Master Builders 2009 House of the Year, in association with PlaceMakers.

"We've entered a home and won at a regional level every year since our first entry in 1995. This time we've hit the jackpot and taken out the national Outdoor Living Award," Mr Fairbairn says.

The Outdoor Living Award is given to the home that best integrates its interior and outdoor living areas, and is a seamless expression of the home's design and construction — an outcome the judges agreed the Central Otago home clearly portrayed.

Judges described the home as beautifully situated, and that it successfully blends in with the local architectural heritage.

"The outdoor living spaces are integrated beautifully with the home, and there's a sense of comfort and warmth the minute you walk onto the property," the judges said.

David Reid Homes' (Central) unique selling point is that it not only offers building services, but has an in-house design team available to assist in the building process.

"We find that around 80% of our clients use our internal design team. It offers a holistic approach to the building process and helps to personalise their home," Mr Fairbairn says.

"Our design team has helped us establish a real niche in the building industry, specialising in high-end architecturally-designed homes, while also catering for lower to mid-range clients."

Building has always been a passion for Mr Fairbairn, who purchased David Reid Homes (Central) nine years ago, and who holds a Bachelor of Construction, along with a qualification as a quantity surveyor.

"I've got 20 years of experience in the building industry, so I have done a fair few projects. The great thing about this project was that the home owners actually came to us," he says.

"It's always a compliment when people approach you based on your reputation."

Mr Fairbairn is forecasting a steady year in 2010, and has a number of projects under way, some from overseas clients.

"We have developed the infrastructure to build homes for people who are based overseas. One of the things we do is video the building process in order to keep them up to date — it's a booming business."



David Reid Homes (Central) Ltd, Wanaka, won the Outdoor Living Award in the Registered Master Builders 2009 House of the Year, in association with PlaceMakers, with this Central Otago entry.



Mr Fairbairn believes that although winning an award is a great result, "you're only as good as your last build".

"News travels quickly in small areas such as Wanaka, so it's important to always maintain a high standard. If you do a bad job everyone will know about it.

"On the flip side, word of mouth is one of our best marketing channels. When you win awards and achieve top results, people recognise it."

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RMBF Board for 2010

The 2010 RMBF AGM at the Federation's recent annual conference saw the welcoming of Blair Cranston as the new RMBF president, David Fabish the new vice-president and two new board members — Greg Pritchard and John Macdonald.

It was also time to say farewell and thank you to outgoing president Brent Mettrick, and Leno Federico from the board.

Mr Pritchard has 20 years' experience in the construction industry, and is currently general manager, building for Fletcher Construction Company Ltd.

He is keen to participate in pan-industry initiatives to drive greater professionalism, better safety performance and enhanced value for money. He believes the RMBF has a valuable part to play in



The RMBF Board for 2010, from left: Greg Pritchard, Anthony Leighs, Blair Cranston (president), Warwick Quinn (chief executive), David Fabish (vice-president), Richard Carver, John Macdonald and Michael Fox (chairman).

fostering change.

Also a long-standing RMBF member, past president of the Waikato RMBA and with a very successful record at House of the Year, Mr Macdonald joins the RMBF

board this year.

He believes that you get out of life what you put into it, and is sure that he'll grow within his role on the RMBF board.

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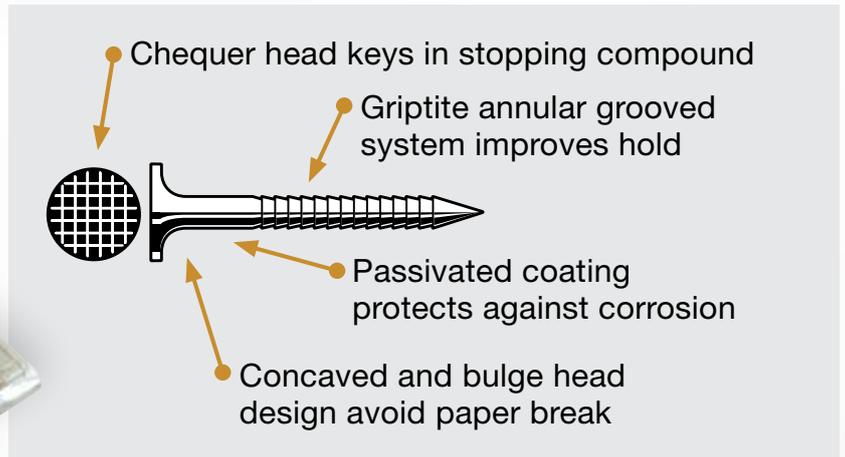
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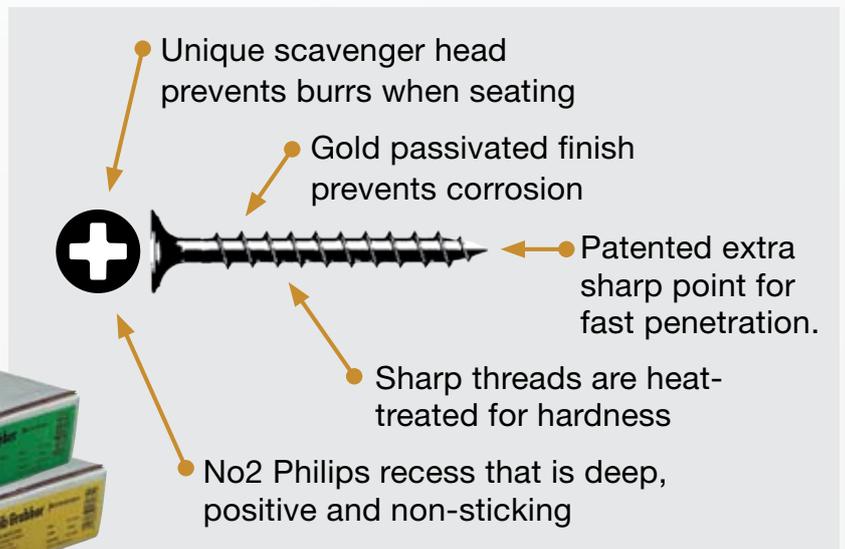
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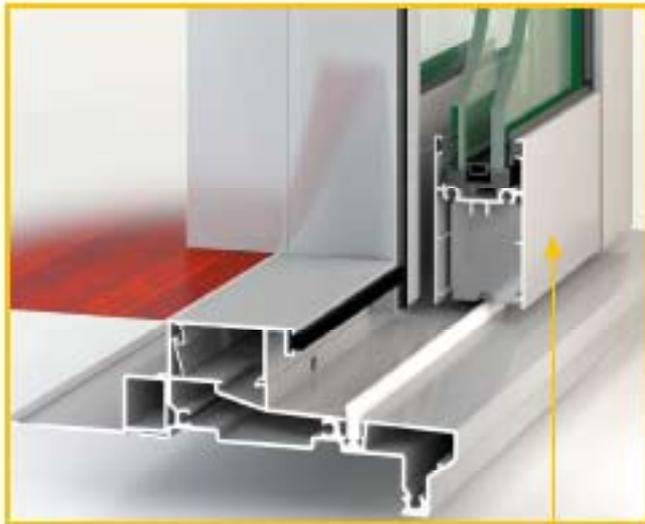


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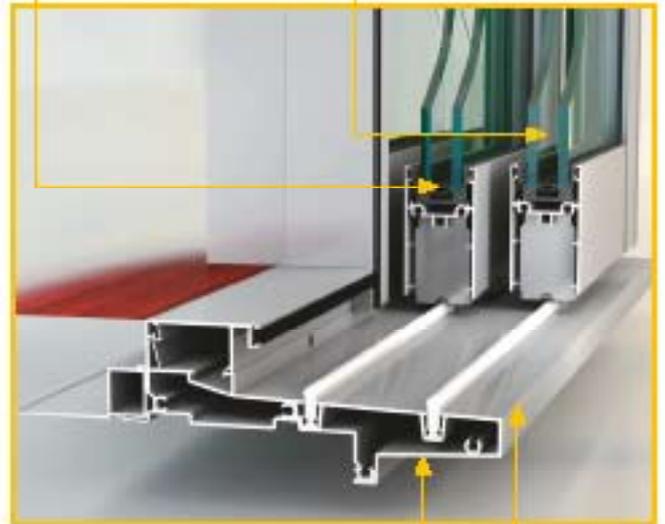
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Building a simple house just got easier

Aspiring home owners should now find it quicker and cheaper to build a simple home thanks to a new guide for streamlined consenting launched by Building and Construction Minister Maurice Williamson.

"For the first time, all the information needed to design a simple house, including compliance requirements and building standards, has been brought together in one place," Mr Williamson says.

"The Simple House Acceptable Solution document is a guide to building innovative, affordable and easily consentable homes. Without compromising safety or quality, it provides a framework for architects, designers and builders to develop affordable housing."

The Minister says the guide is the latest initiative under the Government's Better Building Blueprint package. The package has included this year's launch of the National Multi-Use Approvals Service, the streamlining of the Licensed Building Practitioners' scheme, and the release of a consultation document on the review of the Building Act.

To illustrate how the guide will work, the Department of Building and Housing (DBH), in conjunction with Housing New Zealand, will build a simple house on a site in Otara, Manukau City.

The design by Stephen Smith from S3 Architects Ltd in Auckland won last year's Starter Home Design competition. The competition demonstrated innovative and affordable home design achieved with limited resources.

Leading New Zealand architect Gordon Moller, said the winning home was a carefully planned design that would make an excellent starter home. With additions, it can grow to meet the changing needs of its owners.

More than 140 entries were received for the competition which was launched by the DBH in March 2008, with the winner announced in March 2009.

The criteria that competition entries had to meet included:

- a maximum of 120sq m of habitable floor area,
- a maximum cost of \$1400 per square metre,
- structural strength and durability for the majority of locations in New Zealand,
- finishes that reflected the requirements for durability and low maintenance,
- designs that allowed for changing family needs over time through adaptability, and the incorporation of lifetime features such as wide doorways and easy access,
- designs incorporating energy, water and material efficiency, and waste minimisation, and
- low ongoing operational costs.

Strategy group to address issues

Building and Construction Minister Maurice Williamson has welcomed the construction industry's move to establish a high-level strategy group to address industry-wide issues.

"I understand construction industry leaders have been planning to establish a body for some time and the announcement of the establishment of this group recently follows considerable work on its structure and composition," Mr Williamson says.

The construction industry strategic group will initially comprise 11 high-level New Zealand executives, and will be chaired by Richard Aitken.

Mr Aitken is the chairman of Beca Group Ltd, one of the largest employee-owned engineering consultancy groups in the Asia-Pacific region.

Mr Williamson says the construction industry has been somewhat fragmented in its approach to the big issues facing the sector, such as lifting productivity and improving skills.

"This group presents an opportunity for the industry to present a thoughtful and united response to challenges facing the construction industry," he says.

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Predictions confirmed

The Registered Master Builders Federation says the figures released recently by Statistics New Zealand confirm their own predictions last month that the recovery being experienced in the new housing sector was unlikely to be sustained in the short term.

This was due to Government announcements signalling a removal of depreciation on investment properties and the potential ring fencing of losses.

Figures show the number of new housing units fell by 8.3% in March (excluding apartments) when adjusted for seasonal effects.

RMBF chief executive Warwick Quinn says the level of enquiry for new homes dropped significantly once these announcements were made, and this has now manifested itself in reduced consent numbers for new homes.

Mr Quinn says "we noticed an immediate drop-off in public enquiry once these announcements were made so, while we are disappointed, we're not surprised".

"This shows just how fragile the recovery is for construction and, with investment properties forming a significant part of the housing market, just how sensitive this sector can be," Mr Quinn says.

He also believes this is evident by the large numbers of existing houses on the market, and that the public is sitting on its hands waiting for the Budget announcements so it can comprehend its impacts before committing to purchasing or building new.

Mr Quinn says while Budget day is likely to confirm what has already been announced, the public will then be able to make decisions knowing the consequences.

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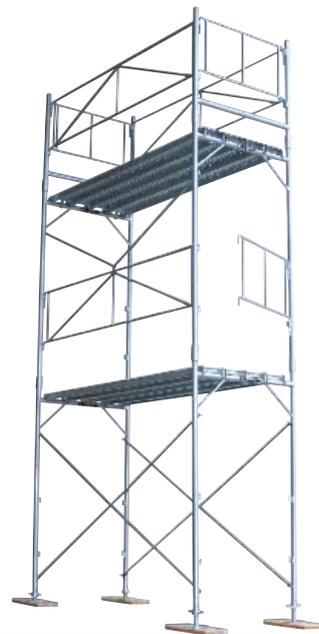
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Milestone Homes: 'Give investors some answers'

Milestone Homes general manager Stephen Murray has slammed the government for fuelling insecurity among property investors, warning it will increase pressure for housing demand.

Mr Murray says for months now the Government has been tipping changes to the way property investment is taxed.

"Its failure to provide any clear direction about those changes has damaged confidence in the market."

His comment comes in the wake of a dramatic fall in the number of building consents authorised between February and March. The trend had been increasing since March 2009.

Mr Murray says large-scale developers and mom and pop investors alike have been holding back on building. "They're understandably nervous about putting money into bricks and mortar because they simply don't know how the Budget announcement will affect their investments.

"And if they aren't building houses, who will build the homes for New Zealanders we know the country so desperately needs?"

Last year the Tax Working Group recommended a number of options to curtail New Zealanders' passion for property investment.

That's not what the economy needs, at a time when the residential construction industry is one of the few sectors driving its recovery, Mr Murray says.

"The construction industry is worth billions every year. And we know the country is crying out for more affordable homes as the present level of house building is not enough to meet the growth in population.

"Yet the majority of market activity is being driven by existing home owners and first-home buyers, rather than investors.

"Milestone Homes appreciates the work under way for regulatory reform in our sector, which will go some way to removing red tape around building new homes. At the same time, the Government is undermining that work by tinkering with the tax system," Mr Murray says.

"We urge finance minister Bill English to give investors some answers, and put an end to the indecision so we can get on with building the houses New Zealand needs."



Milestone Homes general manager Stephen Murray

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Fabrication collaboration achieves exacting export delivery

Last year, as part of the environmental emissions upgrade of the Societe le Nickel (SLN) smelter in Noumea, the structures and mechanical air ducting for two projects (the Shaking and Bessemer Projects) were designed in, and procured from, New Zealand for shipment and erection in New Caledonia.

New Caledonia is a small country with a population of about 250,000. With the construction of two other major industrial projects under way at the time, fabrication capacity in the country was limited.

Thus fabricating in New Zealand was economical, and did not tread on the toes of New Caledonian industries.

The project's success shows the calibre of New Zealand steel design and construction professionals who were able to design, procure, fabricate, paint and ship all the steelwork for a project overseas with exacting results, despite a very condensed time frame.

Ultimately it shows what can be achieved with real collaboration, strenuous effort and a positive attitude.

Steel was used for two clean-up projects at the smelter as part of meeting new environmental emissions standards. The Shaker and Bessemer processes in the SLN Smelter produce harmful fumes and particulates. These had to be captured, and "clean" air vented to the atmosphere.

Approximately 300 tonnes of ducting manufactured from Cor-ten plate steel, and 250 tonnes of structural steel for the towers and trestles to support them were shipped to Noumea.

The circular ducts, ranging from 800mm to 1200mm in diameter, were designed to capture and transport dirty gases to a gas cleaning facility. The towers and trestles that support them are between 10m and 20m high.

Beca carried out the process, mechanical and civil/structural design, procured the equipment and steel, and was the direct New Zealand interface for the projects dealings with SLN.

"Everything was precision designed, even down to all material being able to fit inside standard shipping containers," according to Gareth Hancock, consultant at Beca, Auckland.

For Beca, the biggest challenge in the design of the ducts was the varying temperatures during the process cycles, with gas temperatures up to 600°C.

This was overcome by incorporating expansion joints at various points and carrying out detailed stress analysis of

the ducts. All structures and ducts had to withstand cyclone wind forces, and were designed to New Caledonian regulations and French codes.

Economics, both in time and cost,

made steel the structural support choice. Grade 300 steel was used for the critical strength and deformation required.

"Cor-ten" steel was used for the elevated ducts due to the potential high temperatures of the gases. The chemical composition of Cor-Ten steel provides high resistance to atmospheric corrosion.

Grayson Engineering was chosen for the project as a fabricator highly experienced in ducting work and structural steel. There was close collaboration between the two parties, with regular, generally weekly, meetings.

"The quality of the drawings provided by Beca was great," Grayson Engineering's David Moore says. "This made quality control easier when the project unexpectedly came under extreme time pressure.

A worldwide shortage of Cor-ten steel at the time moved the goal posts dramatically. Despite this, Grayson Engineering was able to source material and draw on and co-ordinate other fabricators to meet the target dates of both projects in mid-2009.

The main trio dealing with the bulk of the plate cutting, fabrication and welding were Grayson Engineering (Auckland), Energyworks (New Plymouth) and TP Engineering (Auckland). Other companies involved around the country were Jensen Steel Fabricators (Tauranga), PFS Engineers (Hamilton) and Kawerau Engineering (Kawerau).

"The most heartening thing about this project is the coming together of professionals with a can-do attitude who want to make it happen," Mr Moore says.

"That we completed the fabrication to time, and that it all fitted exactly on site is a reflection of the diligence and attention to detail of everyone involved."

And the willingness to work shifts around the clock!

"The work time was condensed dramatically — with the equivalent of six months' work having to be completed in just three," TP Engineering's Tony Herewini says.

Quality management throughout was an absolute necessity. There was no room for error because if it did not fit on site in New Caledonia it would have been a nightmare for subcontractors, with major cost implications, given the high price of labour there.

The result was a flawless perfect fit — and on deadline! It shows the level of expertise ingrained in New Zealand's local industry — 100% world standard operators.





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Outward Bound experience lives on for scholarship winner



Six months on from his Outward Bound experience, and Tyrone Parson, winner of a BCITO Specialist Trades Outward Bound Scholarship, is still reaping the benefits of his experience.

"My boss says he's seen a positive change in my attitude towards work, and even my parents have noticed the improvement," Tyrone says.

"It has definitely enhanced my confidence in the work place, so that's got to be a good thing!"

Tyrone, who works for Pettefar Tiling on the Kapiti Coast, was one of four recipients of the BCITO Specialist Trades Outward Bound Scholarship, which is awarded to BCITO apprentices who demonstrate outstanding commitment and enthusiasm to a specialist trade — in his case, tiling.

Each of the winners was rewarded with a 21-day Outward Bound programme, which they took part in alongside other construction industry apprentices, including the regional winners of the Registered Master Builders Apprentice of the Year, in association with Carters.

BCITO chief executive Ruma Karaitiana says the Specialist Trades Outward Bound Scholarship has been designed to assist BCITO trainees in their personal and professional development.

"The 21-day Outward Bound programme really pushes participants out of their comfort zones. Our apprentices

are exposed to a wide variety of character and confidence-building exercises that assist them in their long-term personal and career development."

Tyrone's Outward Bound course was attended by about 80 young construction apprentices who were split into groups of 14.

"It was great to be on the course with the other tradesmen. We all got on really well and it's always more fun when you can share your experiences with others. I actually still keep in touch with a lot of the guys," Tyrone says.

Before embarking on the programme, Tyrone says he expected it to be mentally and physically challenging, but admits he wasn't quite prepared for all the physical activities.

"I expected to be out of my comfort zone, but the 3.2km morning runs were a bit of a surprise. It was even more of a shock when we found out we were running a half marathon — but I was pleasantly surprised with how I went," Tyrone says.

Tyrone says some of the highlights of the programme were the sailing and kayaking, but that he also enjoyed some of the more thought-provoking activities.

"We did an exercise called the 'run of life', where we used a map to run to different locations. The exercise is designed to help you reflect on your own life and to appreciate the things you have — and it really worked."



When asked if he would recommend the programme to others, Tyrone says "don't hesitate, just fill out the form.

"You get to see the sights of New Zealand, and the programme really pushes you to your limits. I did things on the Outward Bound course that I would never have done on my own. It really challenges you and shows you that you can achieve anything when you put your mind to it."

Recipients of this year's Specialist Trades Outward Bound Scholarship will be announced this month.

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Calling all men, come one, come all



This year's Men's Health Week campaign runs from June 14 to 20, and coincides with International Men's Health Week.

Men's Health Week is a major international preventative health campaign to raise awareness of the need for men to take steps to be proactive about their physical and mental health.

It is intended to encourage preventative activities being undertaken to encourage men to make healthier lifestyle choices.

The campaign is designed to tackle the widespread "she'll be right" attitude of many New Zealand men when it comes to health, and Carters is proud to support the Men's Health Week 2010 campaign.

A number of ambassadors are supporting the campaign. Cocksy is involved, alongside rowers Mahe Drysdale, Nathan Twaddle and Eric Murray, and other well-known Kiwis, including Brendon Pongia and Bull Allen, with support from the New Zealand Army and the New Zealand Defence Force.

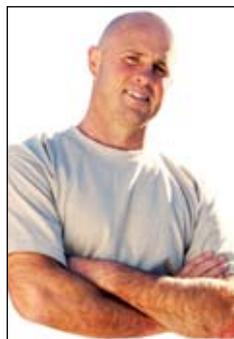
The Men's Health Week will be launched on 14 June in Wellington, so if you're around, head down to Parliament and get your free men's health check at the New Zealand Defence Force's on-site medical tent.

Carters will be hosting Builders Trade Breakfasts around the country at some of its branches. This is a great opportunity to come in with your work mates, have a healthy BBQ breakfast, listen to entertaining guest speakers and receive a free health check.

We know builders and those in the trade never get around to getting check-ups at their GP, so why not come and get free food and a check-up!

National Fielddays falls right in the middle of Men's Health Week, so come visit the Carters stand H72 and H74 at Mystery Creek and learn a few things about improving men's health.

If you've read this article, you're on your way to a healthier lifestyle, so rally around your teams, get your work mates and together let's support Men's Health Week!



Cocksy



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• For more info: Ph Carters 09 272 1440

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