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THE OFFICIAL MAGAZINE OF THE REGISTERED MASTER BUILDERS FEDERATION

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What leading companies are hoping for in imminent report

Inside:

Mainzeal in receivership

Impending insurance changes

Government apprentice incentives

Houston's Beer Can House



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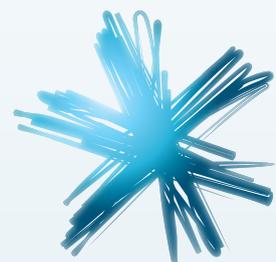
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inside this issue

RMBF News	4-9
Impact of impending insurance changes; Improving SME productivity	
Industry News	12-22
Mainzeal receivership; Hopes for Health & Safety report; Apprenticeship incentives	
Profile	24-25
Mitre 10's growth in the New Zealand trade supply sector	
Back in Time	26
Find out what made the headlines way back when . . .	
BCITO News	26
Demand for Auckland apprentices skyrocketing	
Products	28
Insulated panels; Data roaming plan	
Steel	30-33
The Te Mihi geothermal power project at Wairakei	
Columnists	36-38
Don's top of the construction industry pop charts; Houston's Beer Can House	
Building Consents	39
Monthly building consents by region	

Just when you thought it was safe to risk a more positive outlook on the country's construction sector. Just when you thought the industry had turned the corner. Just when you thought building in general was back on track.

Mainzeal's Waitangi Day receivership shocked many and plunged the lives of subcontractors across the country into a state of deep uncertainty.

The coming weeks will reveal the depth of the company's ultimately parlous state — and the consequent fallout. One can only hope that the upturn, especially in Auckland and Christchurch, will soak up some of the imminent job losses.

On a positive note, however, is news of the Government's \$40 million investment in construction apprentices and their employers. It couldn't have come at a more opportune time.

Andrew Darlington
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cover story 14

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chief's chat

by ceo warwick quinn

Impact of impending insurance changes



Hello everyone and welcome to 2013. I trust you all had a decent break over the Christmas/New Year period, and that 2013 has started well for you.

2013 promises to be a period of great change. Further amendments to the Building Act, updates to the Construction Contracts Act, and the Government's responses to the Royal Commissions of Enquiry are among a few of the changes we can expect.

However, one of the most significant changes will be introduced by insurance companies and the way they insure people's homes. Gone will be the current standard open-ended replacement insurance policy, and in its place will be a "fixed sum insured".

Many New Zealand home owners will be affected as they face a shift from being insured for a home's unspecified replacement cost to being insured for a maximum specified amount.

The home insured will be the maximum amount payable for any claim under a home policy, so it will be important that home owners ensure that the sum insured amount reflects that likely cost of rebuilding their home as accurately as possible.

I am advised by the insurance industry that, under this model, the maximum the insurer would pay is that sum agreed to, even if the actual cost of rebuilding turned out to be greater than that.

If the sum insured is set too low, a home owner may have to rebuild to a lesser size or quality, or pay some of the rebuilding cost themselves.

Why is this happening?

A number of reinsurers — the companies that cover

insurance companies against natural disasters and catastrophes — are asking for homes in New Zealand to be insured for a specified amount.

This is because they want to know the maximum amount that insurers would have to pay to rebuild them.

Now, I can understand why they would want this and their need to understand just what they are covering as, at present, they have no idea just how much they are exposed to. Clearly, the Canterbury situation has highlighted this for them.

I am not going to argue whether they should or they shouldn't adopt a fixed sum insured approach. While clearly the current regime is better for the home owner, if a fixed sum insured model is the only type of insurance we can get (or nothing at all) then we will take it.

As home owners begin to understand this change, they are likely to seek advice and assistance from experts on what it would cost to rebuild their home.

I have been speaking with IAG about this, and IAG will be leading a programme to educate home owners on the change. We understand IAG will be providing information in insurance renewal packs and online at the time of implementing these changes, including an online calculator that can generate an estimate of the cost of a rebuild. I understand others are carrying out similar campaigns.

Impact on RMBs

Given all of this, I expect Registered Master Builders may well be approached to provide advice on what it might cost to rebuild a former client's home, or for general estimations from the public.

Indeed, the public will be looking for whatever assistance they can from experts such as builders, engineers, valuers, quantity surveyors, architects and designers.

This may seem innocent enough, and many of you may think this is a business opportunity — after all, there are about 1.7 million homes in New Zealand.

But I caution you about such approaches, as this is not as straightforward as you might at first think. I used to undertake these insurance assessments in the commercial property sector in a former life and, unless you understand what you are doing, it is a trap for the unwitting.

Let me explain a couple of implications (which are by no means all of them) to highlight what I mean.

When determining the fixed sum insured it is not as simple as just deciding how much it would cost to replace the home today. That is the easy part. You have to think forward, as inflationary provisions and time may have a significant effect on your assessment.

First, you have to assume there is a loss on the last day of the insurance period — ie day 365. If that occurs there has already been 12 months' worth of inflation on the figure you assessed today.

Should that happen there will be further time extensions before the rebuild is complete, as one has to go through the claims process, demolish the existing improvements (at a potential cost if not covered in the policy), obtain resource and building consents, tenders, and then the building period.

Depending on the type of house, this could take another year, perhaps longer if it is a large complex home. So you may have to allow another 18 months (or more) of inflation on top of the first 12 months.

These inflationary costs are not CPI costs but the construction cost index, which can vary from the CPI. Furthermore, they are compounding annually, akin to interest calculations.

Rebuild timelines can be further influenced by the claim circumstances. If it is a straightforward one-off single event (eg, a house fire) then your rebuild time estimate will differ than if the claim was made as a result of a large disaster, such as the Christchurch earthquakes. It then may be years before the rebuild happens.

Continued page 7

Improving productivity in the small to medium-sized building company

By RMBF president

David Fabish

Productivity improvements are gained by the implementation of ideas and innovations that reduce costs and improve value.

For building firms that lack the economies of scale that larger companies enjoy, the challenges are very real.

The New Zealand construction sector is characterised by a large number of small to medium-sized firms, with only a relatively small number of large firms.

A massive 91% of firms in our sector have five or fewer employees, and we also have a high proportion of sole traders, at 21% of this total.

While larger firms have dedicated departments for human resources, health and safety, and marketing and finance, often the small to medium business owner must cover all of these roles personally.

Managing productivity outputs through a good work ethic and production on site are relatively easy to control. However, it is in the management side of the business where most gains can be made.

Supervision

- The world is short of good organisers!
- Continual improvement in managing the flow of labour, materials, specialist trades and design is critical to efficiency.
- By disciplined planning, constant communication and attention to detail, projects will run as smoothly as possible.
- By encouraging staff members to bring fresh ideas and to solve problems promptly, they can be empowered to work more effectively.

Health and Safety

- The construction sector has had the highest proportion of work-related fatalities over the past six years out of all New Zealand industry groups, and a higher than average number of non-fatal injuries over the same period.
- Each of these has a negative effect on productivity through project disruption and loss of skills, time, morale and focus.
- We need to change the “she’ll be right” culture to a “safety first” culture.
- Safety planning almost always reveals other



efficiencies in methods, time lines and productivity.

Management

- Management is not some innate ability that some people may have been lucky enough to be born with.
- It is developed by continuous learning, improvement and practice.
- Small to medium-sized firms are especially vulnerable to changes in the economic cycle.
- Financial management is critical to survival and growth through the continual boom/bust cycles that we, as an industry, are particularly exposed to.
- Capital must be retained within the business during the good times to ensure liquidity, productivity and employment impacts are minimised during the inevitable downturns that follow.
- Spending on the bike, the bach, and the boat won't help you much when the going gets tough.
- Good management also means being able to look

ahead and assess risk.

- Currently, I believe we are entering challenging times where there is increasing workloads combined with increasing labour and material costs.
- Firms signing fixed sum contracts without fluctuations clauses that cover cost increases are vulnerable and exposed to risk.
- Personally, in the past, I have seen many building companies go bust at this stage of the cycle.

Quality

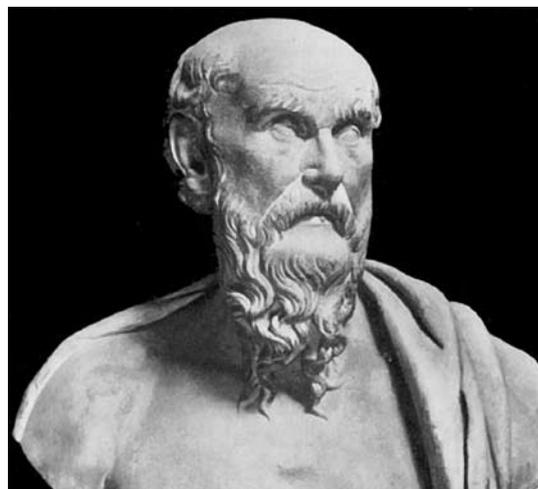
- Defects and rework are the enemy of productivity.
- Taking enough time to get it right first time always costs less than returning later to fix it.
- It is important to always have the right equipment, information and processes at the coalface.
- Having an on-site computer or smartphone to access manufactures' and regulators' information and web sites is essential.

Succession

Most small to medium-size businesses simply close down when the owner retires. This causes disruption to employment, training, suppliers, systems, specialist trades and the client base. By planning ahead for ownership change, business owners can ensure continuity.

Productivity can be increased by hiring the right people, managing them and the business efficiently, and building a quality product that's priced correctly.

You may be a great builder, but the challenge is to build a great business.



“It is best to do things systematically”

Hesiod, 700 BC

A win for challenge-driven Ben

Ben Bersma entered the Registered Master Builders Carters 2012 Apprentice of the Year competition knowing it would be a great experience and push him to his limits. However, he never expected to win third place at the nationals.

The 24 year-old carpentry apprentice decided to give Apprentice of the Year a go after a chat with his BCITO training advisor, and he's delighted he did. Ben hopes all apprentices will take advantage of the opportunity.

"The pressure I was put under as part of Apprentice of the Year was a great learning curve for me. Being scrutinised on what I learnt during my apprenticeship, as well as building my portfolio and presence, was very testing. It's great to know I could withstand that pressure," he says.

"I would encourage any apprentice to get involved in Apprentice of the Year. It's an invaluable experience if you're willing to really go for it — you'll gain as much as you put in, which is so rewarding."

Ben was originally inspired to get into the construction industry and undertake an apprenticeship after travelling around Europe and appreciating different architecture. Always keen to be challenged, it was this mentality which saw him go so far in the competition.

Ben was extremely grateful for the \$2000 grant for tools he won as part of his prize package, and the opportunity to attend the Registered Master Builders PlaceMakers 2012 House of the Year event.

"Attending the House of the Year event definitely made me want to get involved — it looks like a fantastic experience. It's definitely something to aim for!

"One day I'd love to own my own business, so I've got a lot of skills to develop as I work towards that goal.



Above: Ben Bersma during the Apprentice of the Year national practical component at Carters Wingate in October 2012.

Below, from left: Carters chief executive Paul Bull, third-placed Ben Bersma, and RMBF president David Fabish.



I'd like to develop and harness skills as a foreman and a builder running sites, and I'd like to develop management and business skills too."

Ben is also supportive of the Government's recently announced incentive for apprentices, an investment of up to \$2000 for each new apprentice and their employer.

"I'm definitely in favour. It's a great kick-start for young

people to get involved in the building industry — a great opportunity. It's also an incentive for employees to take apprentices on. As long as job opportunities are available, that can only be a good thing."

Apprentices, employers and those young people aspiring to be a part of the construction industry are encouraged to join up to the Facebook page at www.facebook.com/apprenticeoftheyear.

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RMBF says stats confirm Canterbury and Auckland growth

The Registered Master Builders Federation says the latest building consent figures confirm expectations that the Canterbury and Auckland regions will lead the residential building recovery, while activity in the rest of New Zealand may remain weak, perhaps for some time.

Statistics New Zealand figures show 1381 new homes and apartment consents were issued for December 2012, a 23% increase on December 2011. The total new residential consents for 2012 were 16,929 compared to 13,662 in 2011, reflecting a 24% increase.

RMBF chief executive Warwick Quinn has been predicting a "tale of two cities" for some time, and is not surprised by the result.

The outcome for the year is in line with expectations,

and a continuation of this trend is expected for most of 2013.

Mr Quinn says of the 16,929 new residential consents issued, the Auckland and Canterbury regions made up 50%, with Auckland also bucking the usual December drop off, partly due to it being a three-week month last year.

He expects this market share to be greater in 2013 as the rebuild in Canterbury gains momentum and Auckland responds to its housing shortfall.

Property values rising

Mr Quinn says the housing pressures in Auckland and Canterbury are also driving up property values. These are the only regions in New Zealand that have rising prices, which generates greater levels of building activity to meet a shortfall in supply.

The rest of New Zealand has flat property prices and, thus, similar levels of building activity.

Building activity still quite low

Mr Quinn says while the increased level of work is welcomed, overall building activity is still quite low and coming off record low levels.

"New Zealand should be building in the order of 20,000 to 25,000 new homes per annum to maintain its housing stock and population growth, and we have been well below those levels for the past five years," he says.

"While we will see more new residential consents issued again in 2013, it is not on the back of a strong economy, but in response to housing problems in our two biggest cities."

Insurance changes

From page 4

Imagine if a fixed sum insured was set on September 5, 2009, in Christchurch (the 2010 quake was September 4, 2010 – last day of the insurance period) and no inflationary provisions were included in the replacement cost or policy. With the rebuild still two to three years away for many, it could be as many as seven years' worth of construction cost increases on the original 2009 assessment — well short of what is required today.

Furthermore, when natural disasters happen there tends to be a review of building standards. This happened in the case of Canterbury, and foundation (due to ground conditions) and other costs have increased, requiring specific engineering designs on top of normal inflationary provisions.

There are many other considerations in addition to these, but I am running out of space in this column. All I want to achieve is to highlight to you that you need to think twice before you provide advice. You will effectively be acting as a consultant, and could be subject to a claim by a disgruntled home owner for under-insuring their home.

Your current insurance policy will probably not cover you for such a claim, so if you do undertake this work I implore you to obtain the necessary cover and know what you are doing.

Now, I may be doing the insurance companies a disservice as all these implications may well be covered in the policies. We will have to wait and see.

And that is another complication — each insurance policy may be different, so the fixed sum insured may vary for the same house depending on the policy and how it intends to deal with inflation, claim circumstances and new building standard requirements (or not).

So, now that you have some idea of the complexity of this type of insurance assessment, I hope you understand why I am suggesting you are cautious about undertaking this work.



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Platinum Award is the 'ultimate goal'

Allister Saville of AJ Saville Builder Ltd believes the opportunity to measure his business against others in the industry, and the recognition gained, are the biggest business advantages of winning the Platinum Award at the Registered Master Builders PlaceMakers 2012 House of the Year.

The Platinum Award was introduced in 2010. Builders who have won five or more national titles in the House of the Year competition are eligible for the award, which is highly sought after by Registered Master Builders who consistently achieve in the competition.

With a long history in the construction industry, Mr Saville says he is a Registered Master Builder because it helps to advance his reputation as a quality builder.

"Being a Registered Master Builder and winning House of the Year awards satisfies our clients that we will give them a quality result. It's reassurance for them that they are dealing with a select group within the building industry in New Zealand," Mr Saville says.

"Winning the award was such a morale boost for our team, an indication that all our hard work had paid off. Everyone should strive to win the Platinum Award — it is the ultimate goal.

"The House of the Year judges have extremely high expectations, so it should not be underestimated what it takes to win five times. It's a huge achievement."

Joining Registered Master Builders in 1999, AJ Saville Builder Ltd has consistently featured in the House of the Year Awards ceremony.

Their first national category win was in 2003 with the Bathroom Excellence Award, closely followed by taking out the New Homes over \$1 Million and the Pink Batts Ultra Energy Efficiency Award categories in 2006.

In recent years, the company has also won the James Hardie Show Home Award and the New Homes over \$2 million category. Mr Saville was overjoyed to win the Platinum Award after sweating over all of the company's wins.

"I really had hoped we would win, so I was just elated when our name was read out. To join such an elite group of superb builders is a fantastic feeling."

In 2012 AJ Saville Builders Ltd also won the Sustainable Homes over \$1 million category, which was praised by the judges as built to an incredibly high standard in a particularly harsh environment.

"Working within strict covenant constraints the home has, as much as possible, been built with local product, while maintaining a sustainable focus throughout. Big but light on the environment and consciously in keeping with its surroundings, this home is an entertainer's delight," they said.

Mr Saville says his favourite of the houses he has entered in the competition was his 1999 entry.



AJ Saville Builder Ltd won the Sustainable Homes over \$1 million category in the Registered Master Builders PlaceMakers 2012 House of the Year.



From left: Minister for Building and Construction Maurice Williamson, Allister Saville, and RMBF president David Fabish.

"1999 was the first year we ever entered House of the Year. It was also the year we entered the Builder's Own Home category, making this entry a very special one for us," he says.

AJ Saville Builder Ltd's team is currently working on a range of different projects. "We're currently half way through a large project for Millbrook Resort. We're also working on three private homes within the resort, and two homes in Queenstown," Mr Saville says.

"As an organisation, we're all about the challenge. All of our builds are customised to our clients, so we are consistently challenging ourselves to work more proactively with the client and other providers to achieve the very best outcome for them.

"The House of the Year competition fits in perfectly with our philosophy — the experience of measuring ourselves against the rest of the building industry and really finding out our limits has been invaluable."

The Awards are made possible through the support of PlaceMakers, James Hardie, Gib®, Nulook, MBIE - Building and Housing, Future-Proof Building, Carters, ITM, Plumbing World, Resene and Westpac.

For more information about the competition, visit the Registered Master Builders web site at www.masterbuilder.org.nz.



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'Breathless' winner makes it in the nick of time!

Shane Stone of Shane Stone Builders Ltd was still catching his breath when his Wanganui home was announced as the winner of the New Homes \$350,000 - \$450,000 category in the Registered Master Builders PlaceMakers 2012 House of the Year.

While Shane was over the moon with his win, he very nearly didn't make it to the awards ceremony after a spate of unfortunate travel issues.

"I was shocked when our name was read out as the winner — I literally arrived at the ceremony 10 minutes before my category was read out. I was still trying to do my tie and catch my breath," Mr Stone says.

"My flight from Wanganui to Auckland was cancelled because the plane hit seagulls, so we were put on a bus to Palmerston North to catch a flight from there, which we ended up missing too. The odds seemed stacked against me, and it really was a race against the clock to get there in time."

This is the second year Shane Stone Builders Ltd has entered House of the Year. Last year they entered a small commercial job, intending to find out how the competition works. However, this year they entered the competition with the intention of winning.

Mr Stone says it was an honour to win the award, and he encourages anyone thinking about entering the competition to do it.

"We received a huge amount of attention from the media and the public — we had people coming up to us in the street and congratulating us! Before entering the competition we actually had a client choose another company over us, because the other player had won the Supreme Award in Wanganui," he says.

"The point of difference for our winning this house was its crispness. We paid so much attention to detail, and I think it was this meticulousness that ultimately won us the award.

"If you want to win, you really need to give it your all. Now, every time we start a house we start knowing our objective is to enter it in House of the Year. It's something to work towards.

"Winning was such a reward for all the hard work we have put in over the past four years — if you have a house you think is worth entering, go for it. It's well worth it."

House of the Year judges hailed the winning three-bedroom Wanganui home as a stand-out example of the simple things done well.

"Owning a warm and dry home has huge appeal, especially with the benefits that make life easier, which ensure that the home is comfortable and warm," they said.

Mr Stone loved being part of House of the Year, and has every intention of entering this year too.



Shane Stone Builders Ltd won the New Homes \$350,000 - \$450,000 category in the Registered Master Builders PlaceMakers 2012 House of the Year.



RMBF Director John Macdonald (left) and Shane Stone.

"At this stage, we're looking to enter the Builder's Own Home and one other category," he says.

"Clients really recognise what it means to place in this competition, which is fantastic. Even telling clients that I am a Registered Master Builder speaks volumes."

The Awards are made possible through the support of PlaceMakers, James Hardie, Gib®, Nulook, MBIE - Building and Housing, Future-Proof Building, Carters, ITM, Plumbing World, Resene and Westpac.

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STCF calls for equitable treatment for Mainzeal subcontractors

Organisation wants retentions money paid out to subcontractors

The Specialist Trade Contractors' Federation (STCF), an umbrella group representing the interests of specialist trade contractors in New Zealand, has warned that the 400 Mainzeal staff affected by the firm's collapse is just "the tip of the iceberg".

Mainzeal Property and Construction, New Zealand's third largest construction company, went into receivership early this month.

The company's director Richard Yan said the company could no longer continue trading due to a "series of events that had adversely affected the company's financial position", combined with a general decline in commercial construction activity and lack of shareholder support.

STCF president Graham Burke says there is likely to be three or four times that number of subcontractors working for the company and now facing financial uncertainty.

He called for receivers PwC to provide assurances that subcontractors will be treated equitably, and that retentions which have been held by Mainzeal will be paid out.

Construction firms often hold up to 10% of a subcontractor's total invoice as a retention, without interest, for up to two years after the completion of a contract by way of a guarantee.

"While the Mainzeal staff, Inland Revenue, banks and finance companies will be the first to be paid out, subcontractors are treated as unsecured creditors," Mr



Burke says.

"When Hartner collapsed in 2001 it was holding millions in retentions. The amount held by Mainzeal could run into tens of millions.

"The STCF has been lobbying for the introduction of a binding security of payment for subcontractors. We are seeking assurances from PwC that Mainzeal subcontractors will be treated equitably regarding payments owed to them and that retentions, which have been paid by the client, will be paid to the subcontractors, who have provided the materials and labour and carried all the risk."

Mr Burke says some subcontractors would be owed significant sums and, if they were not paid, that could make their own businesses insolvent.

"Potentially, if subcontractor businesses start to go under because of this, it could create a ripple effect up

and down the chain, because they then may not be able to pay the smaller subcontractors working for them, even those not working on Mainzeal sites.

"Also, if subcontractors with large exposure to Mainzeal have to be wound up and can't complete jobs they are working on for other construction firms, then those companies may struggle to find new subcontractors willing to complete the work at historic rates.

"That makes it all the more important that the receivers act swiftly to provide answers for subcontractors and some confidence for the industry."

Mr Burke says the STCF is also concerned that the issue of security of payments for subcontractors is not reflected in amendments to the Construction Contracts Act, which is due to go through the Bill process.

Where to from here?

Mainzeal receiver PwC has predicted that an initial report would be ready by the end of February after working through the company's financial statements, but that it was unlikely the company would be able to trade its way out of receivership.

Among other options the company might be able to take would be to go up for sale, or that individual contracts could be sold.

The company's biggest job was as head contractor at

Manukau Institute of Technology's new \$250 million campus above the new Manukau railway station.

Included in the approximately 40 jobs the company is working on around New Zealand are Victoria University's \$67 million The Hub, and a Manukau building for the Ministry of Justice.

It has also been working on two of Christchurch's biggest demolition projects — Queen Elizabeth II Park and the 17-storey Clarendon Tower office block.

All 40 sites are now locked down until a full audit of

the work on the projects is completed by the receiver, although some subcontractors have been allowed access to retrieve tools and equipment left on site.

Meanwhile, Christchurch earthquake victims awaiting repairs have been reassured their work would be completed.

Vero and AA Insurance use MWH Mainzeal for residential repairs and rebuilds on quake-hit properties, and they told customers that their domestic building projects' progress would continue as usual.

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Health and Safety check imminent for construction sector

Leading companies looking for a mentoring rather than policing role to be adopted

The deadline for compilation of a report on New Zealand's workplace health and safety has been extended to April 30, 2013, to give the independent taskforce working on it enough time to assess written submissions garnered from a consultation document.

The report was originally to have been presented to the Government at the end of last year, six months after the taskforce had been appointed.

While the awaited recommendations from the report's findings will be wide-ranging, *Building Today* has sounded out some of the construction industry's leading players as to what they anticipate.

In his foreword to the consultation document, Workplace Health and Safety Taskforce chairman Rob Jager says while there are many examples of good workplace health and safety commitment, "our national statistics are sobering, unacceptable and ultimately unsustainable".

New Zealand's workplace injury rates are about twice those of Australia and

nearly six times those of the United Kingdom. In addition to the emotional toll on families and communities, Mr Jager reminds us of the economic and social cost — work-related injuries cost our nation around \$3.5-billion annually.

Does the construction sector expect any new initiatives will be taken by the Government following April 30? Arrow International national health and safety manager Clynton Lereculey is a little sceptical.

Mentoring role hope

"However, many of us are hoping that the policing role adopted by the old Department of Labour could be swapped for a mentoring role. That could be truly transformational and a genuine response to the call for a team approach to addressing the challenge," Mr Lereculey says.

Hawkins Construction Ltd northern region health and safety manager A J Staples believes all initiatives taken to address our poor health and safety record will give hope that we can do better in both the commercial and residential construction sectors.

"Too often we hear residential builders complaining about compliance costs. These mustn't be used as an excuse for failing to raise their standards," Mr Staples says.

"It's my view that visibility is the key to improving New Zealand's health and safety performance in the construction workplace. Visibility helps guard against vested interests driving their own agendas."

Most, if not all, of the leading companies in the construction sector have already launched health and safety programmes of their own.

Building Today asked Mr Lereculey if he thinks the Government is aware of these initiatives.

"Very much so," he says. "As I speak, I'm driving to a meeting with government officials and major companies engaged in the Christchurch rebuild. We meet regularly to provide feedback on progress.

"Also, large organisations such as Site Safe are fully aware of, and support, the health and safety programmes that main contractors run."

In Canterbury, the major players (Government, the principal contractors, ACC and the insurers, to mention a few), are talking about a more co-ordinated approach being made possible by the work of the Health and Safety Taskforce. All agree that there should be a level playing field.

Take Fletcher Construction, for example — with its responsibilities in the Christchurch rebuild, the company has 4500 subcontractors ranging in size from moderately large to the man with his dog and a ute.

For many, the prospect of compliance costs following the enactment of new workplace health and safety legislation is daunting. Yet Fletcher Construction, as the main contractor, is held accountable for their subcontractors' onsite conduct.

"Legislation is required," Dan Mulvagh, the company's general manager human resources, health and safety, says, "so that the proper standards are evenly applied and policed across the entire construction sector."

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news

New liquefaction report will help with rebuild

Environment Canterbury has recently released a review of liquefaction information for Christchurch and neighbouring districts outside the green and red zones.

The review report maps areas where building projects will no longer need expensive 15-metre deep ground tests, and other areas where these tests will still be required.

The report covers 20 years of liquefaction studies, and draws on the experience of the 2010 and 2011 Canterbury earthquakes.

Environment Canterbury commissioner Donald Couch says the report provides an up-to-date assessment of the need for geotechnical investigation of liquefaction-susceptible ground in eastern Canterbury.

"This comprehensive piece of work gives our communities better information for those considering building outside areas already zoned by the Canterbury Earthquake Recovery Authority," Mr Couch says.

The main purpose of the report is to provide territorial authorities and communities with general guidance on where geotechnical investigation and engineering assessment of liquefaction potential may or may not be required for plan changes, and for subdivision and building consents.

It may also be useful for lifeline utility and emergency management planning.

"The report covers the Christchurch City Council area, including Banks Peninsula, and eastern parts of the Waimakariri, Selwyn and Hurunui districts, but does not include other parts of Canterbury or land that has already been zoned by CERA," Mr Couch says.

"A map in the report shows areas of solid ground where damaging liquefaction is unlikely, and areas of more variable ground quality where liquefaction assessment is needed during site investigations."

This means that for many areas of Canterbury, fewer deep geotechnical investigations will be required than at present, while those that are carried out will be better targeted.

"You might still need a shallower geotechnical investigation for other hazards though — for example, for susceptibility to flooding or land subsidence," Mr Couch says.

Kelvin Berryman of GNS Science says his organisation, and the Natural Hazards Research Platform he chairs, were pleased to be involved in co-ordinating and funding the report.

"I am sure the results of this collaborative effort will be very helpful for the Christchurch rebuild and appropriate building work throughout Canterbury," Dr Berryman says.

Environment Canterbury has been liaising closely with territorial authorities, CERA and the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment to help inform their natural hazards and building consenting activities.

"It is pleasing that this collaborative work is resulting in the development of consistent processes through MBIE's Building & Housing Guidelines, which now include a section on liquefaction testing specifically taking account of this report," Mr Couch says.

"The practical effect of this is that costly investigations will no longer be done in areas where they are not needed, and will be focused on areas where they can ensure appropriate building solutions.

"This is the way it should be in helping make sure our buildings are as safe as possible for the future of Canterbury."

For more on the report and related information, go to www.ecan.govt.nz/liquefaction.

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Christchurch mayor Bob Parker to open major steel industry conference

Conference to host 200 New Zealand and international engineers and academics

Christchurch mayor Bob Parker will open the Steel Innovations 2013 conference in Christchurch on February 21.

The conference will host around 200 New Zealand and international structural engineers and academics, and is the first major event to be held at the magnificent new Air Force Museum Convention Centre at Wigram.

Alistair Fussell, manager of conference organiser Steel Construction New Zealand, says Christchurch is the ideal venue for the inaugural industry event.

"Structural engineers and academics specialising in steel construction have a lot to offer Christchurch as the rebuild of the city gets under way, Mr Fussell says.



Christchurch mayor Bob Parker

"The overall theme of the conference is resilience, and a large part of the conference is devoted to the latest seismic-resisting structural steel systems from New Zealand and around the world.

"We expect innovations like this will play a significant role in the design and construction of many of Christchurch's new buildings," he says.

During the course of the two-day conference, delegates will have a choice of attending more than 50 presentations covering seismic-resisting systems, composite steel construction, fire engineering, durability, sustainability, steel bridges and light steel framing.

For more information about Steel Innovations 2013 visit www.scnz.org/magazine/scnzconference_steelinnovation2013.

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PlaceMakers Invercargill	Tuesday 19 March	7:00am - 9:00am
PlaceMakers Gore	Tuesday 19 March	5:00pm - 7:00pm
PlaceMakers Te Anau	Wednesday 20 March	7:00am - 9:00am
PlaceMakers Queenstown	Wednesday 20 March	5:00pm - 7:00pm
PlaceMakers Wanaka	Thursday 21 March	7:00am - 9:00am
PlaceMakers Cromwell	Thursday 21 March	5:00pm - 7:00pm
PlaceMakers Alexandra	Friday 22 March	7:00am - 9:00am
PlaceMakers Riccarton	Tuesday, 26 March 2013	7:00am - 9:00am
PlaceMakers Cranford St and Antigua Street	Tuesday, 26 March 2013	5:00pm - 7:00pm
PlaceMakers Kaiwharawhara, Evans Bay, Porirua and Seaview	Wednesday, 27 March 2013	7:00am - 9:00am
PlaceMakers Blenheim	Tuesday, 26 March 2013	7:00am - 9:00am
PlaceMakers Nelson (Richmond)	Tuesday, 26 March 2013	5:00pm - 7:00pm
PlaceMakers Motueka	Wednesday, 27 March 2013	7:00am - 9:00am

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BCITO welcomes government apprenticeship incentives

The Building and Construction Industry Training Organisation (BCITO) is predicting a record number of sign-ups to building apprenticeships, following the Government's recent announcement of a new apprenticeship scheme.

This is on the back of increasing numbers of apprentices in Auckland and Christchurch.

Prime Minister John Key announced the Government would invest up to \$40 million in incentives for the first 10,000 apprentices, and their employers, who sign up after April 1, 2013.

BCITO chief executive Ruma Karaitiana says this will help get more people into trades sooner.

"The construction industry needs as many people as it can get right now. Building work in Christchurch and Auckland is really kicking off, and we expect this demand will stay for quite some time," Mr Karaitiana says.

The BCITO has been inundated with requests from employers in Auckland so far this year, seeing a 70% increase in employers looking for apprentices compared with the last quarter.

Desperate need for skilled apprentices

"Employers around Auckland are calling to say they are snowed under with work and in desperate need of skilled apprentices, so the new scheme is an important step in the right direction for our industry. This will be a great help."

New BCITO apprentices will be given a chance to take advantage of Government subsidies. The subsidy is \$2000 for priority construction trades (carpentry, plumbing, painting and decorating, brick and blocklaying, engineering, electrotechnology). Their employers will receive the same amount.

"We're encouraging Auckland job seekers in particular to register their interest at

www.bcito.org.nz/lookingforwork. From there we may

be able to match them up with employers looking for apprentices, depending on what employers are looking for," Mr Karaitiana says.

The Wellington Institute of Technology also welcomes the recent announcement.

"It will encourage more people to continue their studies and gain a higher level qualification," Wellington Institute of Technology chief executive Linda Sissons says.

"It has been widely recognised that the construction industry required a kick-start to get the rebuild of Christchurch under way and re-invigorate apprenticeship training across the country," Ms Sissons says.

"We trained around 1300 people last year in the priority trades. These graduates have a solid pre-trade tertiary level qualification, and are ready to fit into a workplace and an apprenticeship, and make a contribution from day one.

"We are currently taking enrolments for our trades programmes, and demand is again strong. We are investing in a great new site for carpentry training, and we have committed to increasing (or put significant resources into) the number of people studying engineering to meet a labour market shortage.

"I would urge young men and women to think about trades training as a good career option.

"There are many opportunities for advancement in the construction industry and, as the PM has said, the need for a higher skilled labour force which can contribute to innovation and productivity is essential for a strong economy."

Meanwhile, career seekers interested in an apprenticeship can register their interest at www.bcito.org.nz/lookingforwork, or get in contact on Facebook.

Employers in the construction industry looking for apprentices can call the BCITO on 0800 442 486.

• Further apprentice training story, page 26



Mark Brookes, current owner-operator of The Kiwi Canvas Company, knows the importance of always being responsive to the needs and requests of his customers.



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However, as a result that meant they were frequently going over their monthly limits and their bills were escalating. What the Kiwi Canvas Company really needed was a mobile plan that suited their business needs while allowing them to control their mobile phone costs...

"The problem was we kept going over our monthly allowance and our mobile bills were getting out of control, to the point where I dreaded opening up the bill." Loretta (Office Manager)

2degrees put "nightmare" bills to a stop and was able to take the guesswork out of the Kiwi Canvas Company's monthly mobile costs.

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Mark was immediately back in control of the company's mobile costs. Now that they had the right mix of mobile plans for his business the savings at the end of every month were obvious.

"2DEGREES HELPED ME SAVE \$400 - \$500 PER MONTH WHICH MEANS WE NO LONGER HAVE THAT FEAR AT THE END OF THE MONTH, WHICH IS A MASSIVE RELIEF."

Mark (Owner - Operator)

He and his staff also kept their existing numbers, which meant they didn't lose contact with their existing customers. And Mark was even able to transfer the 0800 number on the website to his smartphone.

In making the switch to 2degrees and getting the right mobile plan for his business, Mark now feels he can limit his spending but not the number of calls he needs to make.

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news

Graduates on way to assist Samoan rebuild



Back row, from left: Ving Faleatua (WellTec plumbing graduate), Tufou Aitogi (Whitireia plumbing graduate), Ken Hodge (WellTec Tutor), Filipino Wright (WellTec plumbing graduate). Front row, from left: Pat Palepua (Whitireia plumbing graduate), Tene Malaki (WellTec plumbing graduate).

A group of five graduates who have just completed a Wellington Institute of Technology (WellTec) or Whitireia pre-trade qualification in plumbing flew to Apia, Samoa, last month, where they will put their newly acquired plumbing skills into practice as volunteers with the Samoan Water Authority, post Cyclone Evan.

"There have been lives lost and 10 people remain missing. Housing has been destroyed, schools and infrastructure are damaged and there is major disruption to water and electricity. This is a serious event for Samoa, and one which the New Zealand Government is responding to," Jackie Frizelle, soon to be New Zealand's High Commissioner to Samoa, says.

"\$2.6M has been contributed to help with early recovery. Supporting these new plumbing graduates and their tutor to get to Samoa to start providing the technical support to restore Samoa's water supply is critical.

"When the Christchurch earthquakes hit, Samoa provided aid to help us. It is fitting, and in the spirit of our nations' friendship, that we now support Samoa by sending these pre-trades qualified people to work with the Samoan Water Authority restoring the water supply system."

One of the graduates flying to Samoa is Vinglouin Faleatua (Ving). A father of five with 14 aunts and uncles in Samoa on his mother's side, Ving can't wait to help out his extended family in Samoa.

"Before I came to WellTec to study plumbing I managed a tyre servicing business. The work was repetitive, and after a while I wanted some new challenges. I spent time remodeling a bathroom with a relative, and was hooked. It was easy to switch careers and now, as a plumber, to be able to do something new every day is really exciting."

Whitireia graduate Tufou Aitogi thanked the New Zealand Government for the opportunity to go to Samoa.

"We are going there to work hard. We are not there to muck around. It's a great opportunity to put our skills into practice."

The graduates' study was supported by the Tertiary Education Commission through the Pasifika Trades scholarship scheme launched in 2012, and the training was provided by Whitireia and WellTec.

As part of its aid programme, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade is funding the graduates' travel and living expenses in Samoa.



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Mitre 10 footing it with

Historically, Mitre 10 has had a strong base in the DIY market but, at the same time, had a number of stores around the country that performed well in the trade arena.

Building Today editor **Andrew Darlington** spoke to Mitre 10 chief executive John Hartmann about the strong growth phase the group has gone through in recent times.

Mitre 10 has been going through a transitional period over the past seven or eight years, mostly with regard to the large format Mitre 10 Mega stores which have focused more on providing a full spectrum of service for trade customers.

However, Mitre 10 chief executive John Hartmann says the group's efforts over the past couple of years have been focused on raising its stores' trade capability on a national level to really become a national player in the trade sector.

"We built the first 22 Megas in eight years, and right now we're on track to build another 22 Megas in half that time," Mr Hartmann says.

"Last year we opened the Whangarei Mega — which replaced one of the old small blue stores there — along with another three in Hornby (Christchurch), Rotorua and Manukau.

"That's 34, with 10 more in the pipeline by the end of 2014, including one in New Lynn, Auckland, and another in Christchurch.

"What goes really nicely with that is the revenue growth of the company, which means that as our scale gets bigger we're able to offer better products and services to our customers.

"So, along with that four-year timeline (to build the next 22 Megas), we'll add another 25% to our top line revenue — from \$800 million in 2010 to just over \$1 billion in 2014."

Mr Hartmann says another exciting component is that older Mitre 10 stores are also going through a transformation.

"We had a variety of formats typically painted blue over the past 15 to 20 years, and they're all being transitioned over to the new-look Mitre 10 — which happens to be orange just like its big brother Mega stores.

"That transformation is beyond just a paint job. It's also improving the quality and the range of products we're offering, and re-formatting not only the outside but the

inside of the stores.

"By the time we get through that process at the end of 2014, 85% of our network would have been touched over, so it's a top to bottom re-refresh for the group, which is pretty exciting."

Mitre 10 groups its stores into roughly three sizes — small, medium and large. Certainly, the Mega has the largest offering for trade customers, but there are some pretty large medium-sized stores that have been known as "Home and Trade" stores over the years.

For example, the Onehunga, Auckland, store is a very large Home and Trade store which is a frequent stop for tradies in the area. That store will be re-imaged or, perhaps, one day grown into a Mega but, either way, it'll continue to serve the trade customer.

Mr Hartmann says Mitre 10 is increasing its resources in order to serve the trade better on a national basis.

"We're not only opening more locations for tradies around New Zealand, but also focusing on the relationship nature of the trade business, which is quite different from the retail side."

Trade general manager Andrew Cochrane joined from Carters in late 2010, and a number of resources have been added to his team to focus on developing those relationships on a national basis, including new trade team members in the North and South Islands.



Mitre 10 chief executive John Hartmann.



The new Mitre 10 Mega store in Whangarei that opened in October last year.

trade supply leaders

“Additionally, we’ve made a very strong commitment to the Canterbury rebuild. We’ve been fortunate enough to be in the position of being one of the primary suppliers for Arrow International.

“We’ve put in place 30-year trade industry veteran, Kevin Rae, in Christchurch as our point of contact to co-ordinate all our stores’ efforts there, and that’s going well.”

A brand new 11,000 sq m Mega opened in Hornby — ahead of schedule in October last year. The other Christchurch Mega is located in Ferrymead, and there are plans to expand the network in Christchurch, to add to Canterbury-based stores in Rangiora and Ashburton.

Mr Hartmann says that trade now accounts for 45% of the group’s business, and that they are well on the way to growing that.

He says Mitre 10 as a group has recently surpassed PlaceMakers by revenue — “if you look at the numbers then we’ve clearly outgrown them”.

Mr Hartmann’s personal background includes a mix of retail and trade.

“Most recently when I came to New Zealand, I came from the trade industry in the United States. I not only have a knowledge for it but also a real passion for trade. I clearly understand the distinction between our retail customers and the relationships we must have to be successful in the trade sector.

“It’s a clear strategy with our board of directors to grow our trade business and not only continue to be the market leader in DIY, but to give tradies another option — and to be the partner of choice for trade in New Zealand. And we think we’re on our way.”

He says Mitre 10 has not necessarily undertaken any big massive marketing campaigns to stimulate their recent growth.

“We’re doing it the quiet way, by just going about building relationships and earning trade customers’ business. But we have done some pretty unique things over the past couple of years.

“In terms of raising our credibility, we spent a lot of time educating our team members around the country



The opening of the new Mitre 10 Mega store in Whangarei in October last year was well attended.



about managing that part of their business, because some of our owners and operators really understand the trade business, but for others it’s very new to them.

“That’s the beauty of what Andrew and our other well-trained guys have brought to our team as they’ve been going around the country raising our trade capability.

“We’re also equipping them with really cool things to communicate with their trade customers, including a Mitre 10 rewards programme and a new IT capability which allows customers to use the one account at any Mitre 10 trade location in the country.”

Each of the stores is now associated with a frame and truss capability which is either Mitre 10-owned or a local production facility that the group has established a relationship with.

Relationships have also been built with the Registered Master Builders Federation, the Certified Builders Association and the Building Industry Federation. An

educational trade magazine called *In Trade* has also been established.

Other relationship-building opportunities put in place include the Export Gold Match Fishing League, sending 80 trade customers to the Bledisloe Cup in Australia last year, and sponsorship of other rugby and motor racing events.

Two trade ute simulators are popular at trade breakfasts and educational and training events around the country.

“Momentum is building, and we’re really excited about focusing on what we perceive as service being so important to our trade customers, Mr Hartmann says.

“We’re adamant that we get it right and go about building that credibility and earning tradesmen’s business.

“Results are coming with a low key approach. We’re getting good feedback, and now it’s just a case of keeping it going.”

BT's Back in Time

Welcome to Back in Time, where we delve into our magazine archives and discover what was making news way back when . . .

20 years ago:

- The Building and Construction Industry Training Organisation (BCITO) was officially recognised by the Education Training and Support Agency (ETSA). The BCITO's primary objective was to work with the Government, Ministry of Education, ETSA, New Zealand Qualifications Authority and all learning institutions to provide training as the building industry dictated.

Six area managers were appointed, at least two of whom, Peter Philipsen and Ian Alexander, are still with the BCITO.

15 years ago:

- NZMBF research revealed that 55%, or 175 of the 318 members who joined the Federation in 1996 and 1997 did so because of the Master Build Guarantee. It also showed that 38% joined because of the status or recognition of being an NZMBF member.

Since the Master Build Guarantee had been introduced in 1990, 9341 guarantees had been received — 298 of them for additions and alterations and rest for new homes. Just over 160 claims had been received — 1.7% of the number of guarantees.

10 years ago:

- The Government was to legislate to tighten regulation of the building industry and extend the current review of the Building Act.

Commerce Minister Lianne Dalziel said the moves were necessary to restore confidence in the building industry and in the quality of New Zealand homes.

Internal Affairs Minister George Hawkins said the lack of overarching regulation of professionals and trades within the building industry was of concern.

5 years ago:

- Three new sustainability awards categories were added to the PlaceMakers 2008 House of the Year competition. RMBF chief executive Pieter Burghout said the new awards were a major development for the competition, which was in its 18th year.

The pricing structure of the new homes categories was also revised.

- The latest building consent figures for December 2007 were the lowest December figure since 2001.

"The Reserve Bank's efforts to dampen down the housing market are clearly working," RMBF chief executive Pieter Burghout said.

www.buildingtoday.co.nz

Demand for apprentices suggests an Auckland building boom under way?

Auckland builders have hit the ground running in 2013, with the BCITO reporting a 70% increase in the weekly number of apprentice requests from the last quarter.

BCITO chief executive Ruma Karaitiana says the organisation has been inundated with requests from employers to source apprentices in the Auckland area.

"This suggests a real spike in building activity in the New Year, and it's refreshing to see the industry heading in a positive direction," he says.

"Employers around Auckland are calling to say they are snowed under with work, and in desperate need of skilled apprentices.

"Some of these builders are looking for multiple apprentices, and some have said they're prepared to take on new trainees, as long as they have a good work ethic, their driver's licence and their own transport."

Great time to start an apprenticeship

"So now is a great time for young people who have finished school, or have done some initial training, to start an apprenticeship through the BCITO," Mr Karaitiana says.

"We're encouraging Auckland job seekers to register their interest at www.bcito.org.nz/lookingforwork. From there we will do our best to match them up with employers looking for apprentices."

Auckland commercial and residential maintenance company, Fixed For You Ltd, has an abundance of work lined up, and owner Brad Williams is currently on the hunt for two carpentry apprentices to join his team.

"Some experience would be good, but we're looking for people with the right attitude," Mr Williams says.

"If they're a team player and they're willing to learn, they can be trained," he says.

Mr Williams says the construction industry has real potential, and encourages young people to get involved.

"New Zealand has a lot of buildings that need ongoing maintenance. And with new earthquake standards for commercial buildings, there's going to be guaranteed work for years to come," he says.

Career seekers interested in an apprenticeship can register their interest at www.bcito.org.nz/lookingforwork, or get in contact on Facebook.

Employers in the construction industry looking for apprentices can call the BCITO on 0800 442 486.

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Insulated panel factory an investment in Christchurch's future

The Conqueror International Ltd factory in Christchurch is an indisputable investment in the earthquake-ravaged city's future.

But the manufacturing plant is creating an impact well beyond Canterbury. It's one year now since on-site work began on the creation of the Conqueror "super-factory" that caters for the manufacture of thermally-efficient and environmentally-friendly insulated panels for use in the construction industry.

The factory, in Yaldhurst Business Park, spans more than 7500 square metres, cost in excess of \$35 million, employs dozens of staff, and has been heralded as a world-leading enterprise.

Conqueror International Ltd is owned by Christchurch entrepreneur Trevor Bills, who describes his manufacturing plant as "a world first" with its ability to produce varied product on an unprecedented scale.

"Typically around the world you would find factories producing either roof or wall panels, or the machinery to do both.

"We produce external walls in four different styles, panels for walls, ceilings and roofs, plus garage doors offering several different options. So we are a very versatile plant," he says.

New Zealand Prime Minister John Key says the Conqueror factory is an example to New Zealand.

"If New Zealand is going to continue to have a strong

manufacturing base then it has to invest in doing what is happening at Conqueror," he says.

"The pattern adopted there is investment in new equipment and good technology — and moving up the value curve. That is how New Zealand can win on the world stage," he says.

Conqueror is proud of its product's sustainable make-up. Its product has received plaudits for its insulated panel construction system with a green heart. The "green" classification relates to its PIR core — all Conqueror panels are devoid of harmful CFCs or HCFCs.

Mr Bills believes the PIR insulation provides the perfect solution for meeting current and perceived future building regulations, and other carbon reduction programmes.

The product's PIR core also offers superior insulation properties reputed to outperform similar products by more than 50%.

Conqueror's garage doors, for example, are thermally insulated and being chosen by consumers wanting a quieter, warmer and, consequently, more cost-efficient home.

The product can also boast remarkable acoustic qualities, an exceptional fire rating and a seismic performance second to none.

It's little wonder then that this highly praised insulated panel methodology was adopted for the construction of



Prime Minister John Key at the Conqueror International Ltd factory opening in Christchurch.

the Conqueror super factory, which was completed in late 2012.

Not only did that mean the use of a product the Conqueror team had utter faith in, it meant building time was minimal in comparison to historical methods.

Mr Bills is convinced his factory and its product has the ability to change the common, current building mindset.

The factory — which features ipad-controlled state of the art plant — has the capability to output a substantial volume of product.

For example, it can produce 14 metres of insulated panel per minute. It also has the capacity to produce New Zealand's entire annual garage door requirement in less than 30 days.

That's a lot of very fine product, Mr Bills says.

Data roaming costs slashed with flat fee pricing

Telecom has a new approach to international data roaming that slashes costs for travellers when using their smartphones and other mobile devices overseas.

A feature is a flat daily rate for data roaming by postpaid customers across major travel markets. Australia roaming starts at a specially reduced rate of \$6 a day (Telecom will review the rate in mid-2013).

Customers pay just \$10 a day flat rate for data while travelling in the UK, USA, Canada, China, Hong Kong, Macau, Taiwan, and Saudi Arabia. Telecom's fair use policy applies to these rates.

Data roaming charges have been slashed by 83% to 92% in other markets, although charges continue to be

on a usage basis.

The new postpaid pricing schedule also includes new voice call roaming rates, featuring a 35% cut in the per-minute rate for Australia. Rate bands across all other markets have been simplified to make them easier to follow, with individual market rates either reduced by up to 50% or broadly similar to current rates.

Telecom chief executive Simon Moutter says the flat rate makes it much simpler for customers to understand data roaming costs, and gives them the freedom to make use of their smartphones in the same way they would at home.

"It's also much simpler to follow than any usage-based system — as most customers don't really know how

quickly their phone apps will chew through 1MB, 10MB or 100MB.

"Currently, around two-thirds of our business customers switch off their data when in Australia, despite most being regular data users when in New Zealand."

Mr Moutter says Telecom has been busy over recent months renegotiating underlying wholesale deals with overseas telcos to make the flat fees commercially possible.

"We've focused first on those markets most important to our business customers, in particular Australia, US and China. We'll keep pushing on behalf of customers and be seeking to add more countries to our flat fee plan as and when we can."

To find out more, visit www.telecomroaming.co.nz.



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Contact Energy's latest geothermal power station

By Roy Kane

The Te Mihi project is a programme of investments focused on expanding the use of the Wairakei steamfield and reducing the environmental impact from Contact Energy's Wairakei operations.

Contact is investing around \$750 million into the construction of a power station; development of the steamfield so that separated geothermal water can be re-injected; a bioreactor project to remove hydrogen sulphide from cooling water before it is discharged to the river; life extension work at the Wairakei geothermal power station; drilling of production and reinjection wells; and development of people and business systems for managing the new assets in the future.

Nearing completion, the Te Mihi Geothermal Power Project is located on the Wairakei Geothermal Steamfield. The project owner is Contact Energy, which owns and operates the steamfield and the Wairakei Power Station sited 8.5km north of Taupo, on the eastern side of Poihipi Road.

McConnell Dowell Constructors Ltd, SNC-Lavalin Power (Pacific) Inc, and PB New Zealand Ltd have entered into a joint venture agreement (hereinafter referred to as MSP JV) to construct the power station, scheduled for completion this year.

Power for 100,000 homes

It will include two new steam turbine generators of 83 Megawatts each, which will generate enough power for more than 100,000 average homes. Once completed, some of the new generation from the Te Mihi station will replace older parts of the Wairakei Power Station, which will be gradually decommissioned.

Parsons Brinckerhoff's senior project manager and principal structural engineer, Michael Flynn, says the main building structure consists of a series of steelwork portal frames spanning the width of the building (east to west), with additional restraint provided by operating floor "strong" primary beams and internal columns and hotwell lean-to portal frames.



This aerial photograph shows the development of the project as at August 10, 2012. The two long buildings at the top (east) house the cooling towers, and the one on the right is about to have its fans fitted.

In the middle lying north to south across the site is the main turbine hall (110m long x 27m wide x 24m high), which houses units #1 and #2 of the turbine and generator and associated equipment.

Along the western side of the main turbine hall are the two transformer buildings and three Power Distribution Centre buildings, while to the bottom of the picture are the administration building and adjoining workshops.

"In the longitudinal (north to south) direction, the tension-braced systems consist of concentrically-braced frames (CBFs) with associated roof struts, wall struts and floor beams.

"An elevated concrete-framed table is supported on large concrete columns that extend to a lower ground floor level and isolate the table from the steel building frame above ground level," Mr Flynn says.

"The concrete table and the operating floor are at the same level, affording maintenance access to the turbines and the generators.

"The two units of the turbine hall building have an almost identical structural layout and are separated by a 10m-wide drive-through bay. Each unit is deemed to be structurally independent in terms of seismic, wind and gravitational loading.

"The 3-D model includes the turbine hall main building frame, the hot well roof and the Non Condensable Gas (NCG) building. The model shows the operating level floor, and below this the mezzanine and ground floors.

"The operating floor consists of predominantly simply supported single span steel beams designed to act compositely with a 200mm-thick concrete slab.

"The operating floor is isolated from the turbine table on all sides to ensure that the turbine table structure and the building steel structure act independently of each other. A sliding cover-plate is provided across the gap for safety reasons.

"Floor beams have been designed as non-composite, simple supported single span beams that act as 'collector beams' for the longitudinal seismic bracing system. This ensures that the ductile failure mechanism can

occur under the Maximum Design Earthquake (MDE) load case.

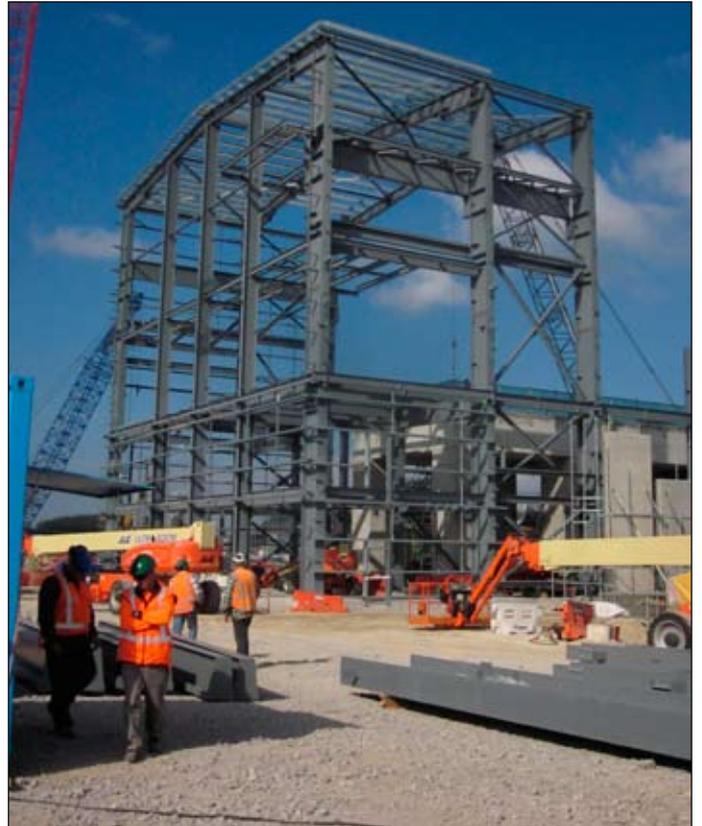
"The mezzanine floor typically consists of simply supported primary beams supported by secondary joists in between the primary beams. Vertical cross-bracing (designed as tension only) has been provided along two gridlines (B and D) under the floor, which acts with the main building bracing system to provide longitudinal stability for the mezzanine floor.

"The main crane runway beams span the portal columns on both sides of the building. They are designed to support a 60T Safe Working Load (SWL) gantry crane which also includes a 15T SWL auxiliary hoist. The crane runway beam is laterally supported by horizontal truss lacing and support beam.

"A maintenance access platform is provided at the northern end of the building. Runway beams have also been installed to support a 5T SWL auxiliary gantry crane."

The Generator Circuit Breaker Rooms (GCBs) are located on the western side of the mezzanine floor and extend to the underside of the operating floor slab above. These rooms are designed to be dustproof, so airlocks are provided.

The NCG building design consists of two main platform levels: the mezzanine floor and the operating floors levels. In between these levels, and above the operating floor level, are several platforms providing maintenance access to plant inside the NCG building. The main framing consists of lean-to frames that match the portal frame spacing of the main



Continued page 32

Erection of the steel structure began at the north end in April 2012.

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Looking down from the operating floor level of unit #1 to the intermediate pressure steam line delivering to the turbine. This opening will be covered by a removable hatch for safety reasons.



The crane runway beam is laterally supported by horizontal truss lacing and support beam.

From page 31

building.

The turbine hall wall cladding is aluminium for increased durability. The main building design provides for an extension to the southern end of the building to accommodate a future Unit #3 turbine and generator.

As the lead fabricator and steel erector, Grayson Engineering was responsible for the structural steel in the main turbine hall, three Power Distribution Centres, and two Non Condensable Gas buildings.

Grayson site co-ordinator Ian Emond says the company arrived on site with a team of 10 erectors plus one welder (for remedial work).

"We'd been given priority to proceed with the main turbine building and quickly started working seven days a week and 12-hour shifts. Initially some connections proved hard to work with, but we overcame this by having them re-detailed, and were soon handling three deliveries a week from Grayson in Auckland," Mr Emond says.

"In the drive to get plant into the main turbine hall, time pressure naturally tended to make all of the subcontractors a little anxious to start, creating work congestion. MSP JV site management addressed this, and sequencing improved dramatically.

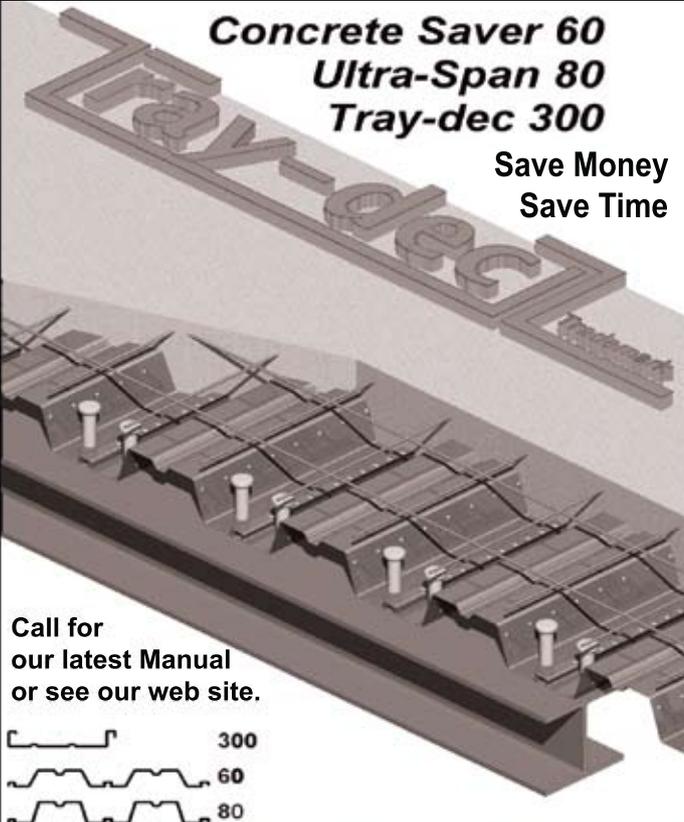
"As far as Grayson Engineering was concerned, it was business as usual in the workshop and business as usual on site. The portal columns had 1200mm webs and weighed 342kgs/m. That necessitated the use of larger access gear and cherry-pickers equipped with sufficient reach.

"Our team quite enjoyed fitting the heaviest steel components, the 5.4-tonne knee-joints. Each of these was connected to its column

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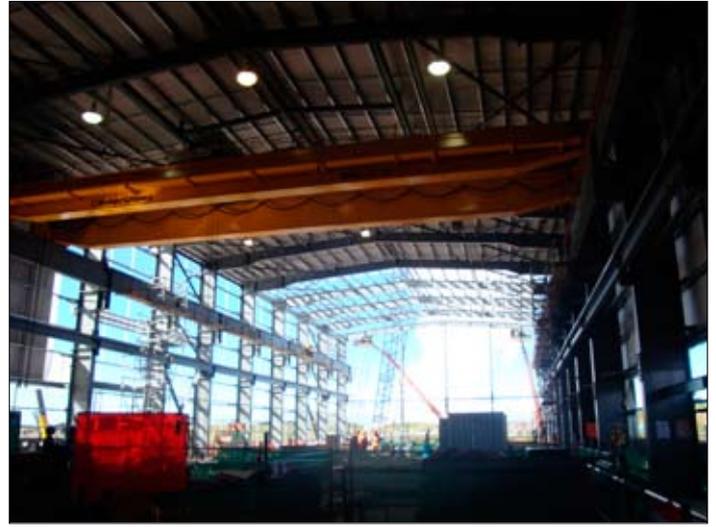
Heavy portal columns progress steadily along the east side.



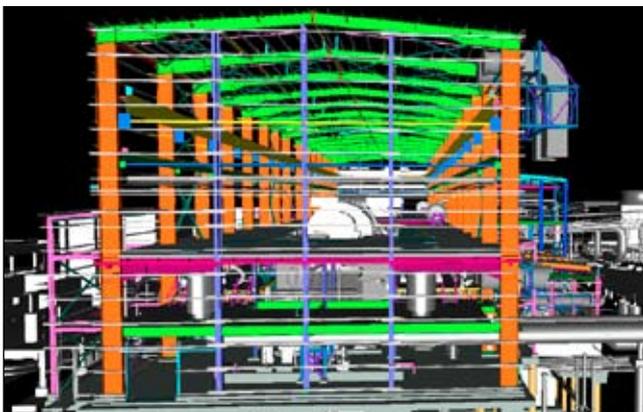
Adjacent to the loading bay are the intermediate (nearer) and low pressure pipe-lines, which take steam to the turbine.



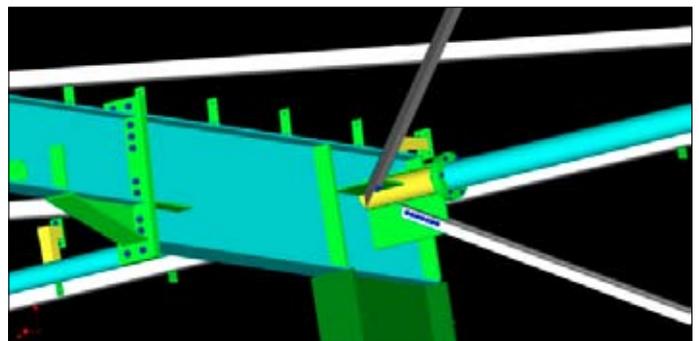
Below the operating floor level, the left and right strainer units (brown) are installed on the mezzanine floor (steel framing only at this stage).



The Upper Gantry Crane, with a Safe Working Load of 60 tonnes, is installed and operational.



A 3-D model of the main turbine hall.



A 3-D model of one of the knee-joints that connect the portal columns to the rafters.

(5-tonnes) and to the rafter (3-tonnes).

"The apex of the rafter was 27m above the operating floor. You don't think about that when you're proceeding phase by phase. For health and safety reasons, no heavy lifts were undertaken outside daylight hours, so at the start and end of our shifts when working light

was provided, we kept ourselves busy with bolt tightening from access platforms."

MSP Joint Venture construction engineer David Pattinson praised Grayson Engineering for adapting its steel erection schedule to suit the best interests of the overall construction programme.

"Time has been of the essence on this fast-track contract, and many trades have overlapped with others. Accommodating follow-on trades has been critical for the overall success of the project and, by showing flexibility, Grayson helped us minimise any potential conflicts," Mr Pattinson says.

What were you asking yourself during the holidays?

By Trades Coaching New Zealand
director Terry Sage

Ahhh the power of the media — who says print is dying and the digital age is taking over marketing?

Well a lot of people actually, but that does not mean they're correct all the time. Trades Coaching New Zealand statistics for the month of December show one referral from digital and nine from *Building Today*, so "yay for print!"

So why is Trades Coaching New Zealand waxing so lyrical about print? It's because we are currently working with nine potential new trades coaches, from Christchurch, Wellington, Waikato, Bay of Plenty, Auckland and Northland, all of whom came from the article in the December issue of *Building Today*.

The article was about recruiting potential trades coaches — we need coaches in place nationwide to start coaching our growing list of tradespeople who want to better themselves and their companies.

The holiday season can be a strange time for us business owners. It is sold to us as a time to "sit back, rest, and rejuvenate yourself" when, actually, sometimes we sit there and think "what am I really doing all this for?"

If the latter was you this year, then I have two answers for you — either become a Trades Coaching New Zealand coach or request the help of a Trades Coaching

New Zealand Coach, and you can be confident that next holiday season you will be saying "I love my job", or words to that effect anyway.

The type of people we are looking for to become Trades Coaching New Zealand coaches are builders or tradespeople who want a change in life, who have owned and operated a successful business, have a good insight into business practices, have good communication skills, have a desire to earn a great income, and want to give back to an industry that has supported them for many years.

If your interest has been raised, see how many of the following you can put a tick against. This opportunity comes with full training, so if you missed one or two don't despair.

- Business ownership experience
- Knowledge of marketing strategies
- Good planning and foresight skills
- Ability to implement systems
- Effective communication skills
- Great time management skills
- Professional image
- Optimism
- Basic accounting skills
- Computer skills
- Prioritising skills
- Great listening skills
- Self-motivated
- Empathy
- Enthusiasm
- Team player

On top of all this, the most important attribute is having the attitude to succeed. Our plan is to become available across the nation, so all trades businesses have a trades coach to call on in their area.

If you feel like a change get in touch with us and have a chat. You never know where it could lead or what you will be saying next holidays.

Become a fully-trained Business Coach

There is an opportunity to be a part of Trades Coaching New Zealand Group and become a fully trained business coach.

We are looking for builders and trades people who want a change in life. If you have owned and operated a successful building business, have a good insight into business practices, have exceptional communication skills and have a desire to take home a great income, we want to hear from you.

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Recent figures released by Statistics New Zealand show consents issued for new homes are on the increase.

This, coupled with the Government commitment to address housing supply in New Zealand signals that building is moving into a new phase of increased activity.

As building activity increases, the call for new homes to meet the needs of all occupants will only increase, and those seeking adaptable and accessible solutions are turning to the Lifemark, an independent seal of approval for homes no matter what age, stage or ability.

The Lifemark is a recognised stamp of confidence for homes that are adaptable, accessible and safe — meaning homes built to the Lifemark Design Standards are at a competitive advantage.

By becoming Lifemark accredited you are differentiating your business from the mainstream, and providing the chance to get ahead of the curve,” according to general manager Andrew Olsen.

“There is an opportunity here, and many of your peers will continue to do the same thing they have done for years — failing to recognise the need to keep up with what clients are asking for,” Mr Olsen says.

“So by becoming Lifemark accredited, you and your business will stay one step ahead of the game.”

A recent survey of 2000 industry professionals found 70% of respondents were already designing housing projects for the 50+ age group, and many are already including specific design features which will accommodate their clients as they age — because the clients are asking for it.

Now is the opportunity to increase your market advantage and become Lifemark accredited.

The benefits of Lifemark accreditation to your business include:

- Helping to differentiate your business in today’s highly competitive marketplace.
- Endorsing your business as a premium provider to New Zealand’s fast growing and financially independent demographic, the over 65s.
- Providing potential clients with a third party endorsement of your commitment to building fit-for-purpose facilities that are fully adaptable, accessible and designed for any age, stage or ability.

Lifemark accreditation provides your business with credibility and your clients’ peace of mind.

To find out more about the marketing and communications, education and training support you will be eligible for as a Lifemark-accredited provider, visit www.lifemark.co.nz, or call 0800 Lifemark.

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I like it

Architect **Don Bunting** rattles off some more random observations about the construction and associated industries. This month: Getting positive — Don's top of the construction industry pop charts.

For the start of a new year I thought I would respond to some mild comment that my blogs can tend toward the negative. So, setting aside the acerbic and the critical, I will instead highlight a few things I like about the construction industry.

For those old enough to remember, the title of this column came from the 1963 hit by Gerry and the Pacemakers. I honestly don't remember the song, but it must have been popular as it knocked the Beatles song *From Me To You* off the top of the pop charts.

So here is my top of the construction industry pop charts:

1 The NZIA

I seriously contemplated leaving the NZIA this year, but on quiet reflection realised that while my role might be small and becoming smaller, the NZIA is an important voice within the design and construction industry.

And the annual awards are an important way to recognise excellence and inform the public about the value of great design. We should all support our own professional and trade associations. They generally do a very good and basically thankless task to represent our best interests and the interests of our industry.

When I saw a recent challenge faced by the NZIA — the frankly mad-headed announcement by the Real Estate Agent's disciplinary tribunal that it was okay to advertise a house as architect designed even if it wasn't — I could only marvel at their self control.

Window flashings

From page 38

installation (or lack of) often gives rise to the need for a significant portion of the reclad remedial works, means that a common defendant to be joined in leaky building proceedings is the construction party who installed the windows and flashings.

Nonetheless, this case highlights the important point for claimants and respondents alike that every case will be considered on its own merits, and the focus remains on the actual works carried out by the contractor onsite and whether those works were, in fact, negligent.

Simply being the installer of the flashings will not automatically result in liability.

The NZIA response and that from the Registered Architects Authority were considered and thoughtful. Obviously the Real Estate Institute is not on my happy list.

2 BRANZ

If you want to know how good BRANZ is just look across the ditch at the almost invisible Aussie equivalent CSIRO. Everyone seems to have a view on what BRANZ does and doesn't do, but the organisation has to straddle the line between receiving financial support from the building levy and the need to maintain a commercial business model.

This commercial work helps ensure there is sufficient funding for its pro bono work supporting Standards committees and the like.

My own personal experience of BRANZ has been via the BRANZ chief executive's involvement as an extremely supportive board member of the enterprise I still work for, and also through my work with a number of BRANZ staff on DBH and Standards committees.

The work BRANZ scientists do behind the scenes on, for example, preparing the myriad design tables in NZS 3604, is impressive, and deserves greater recognition.

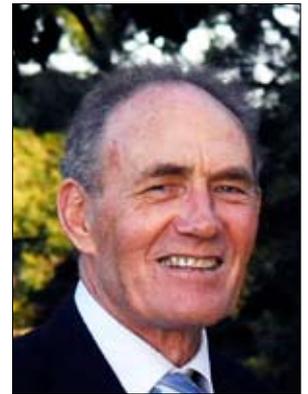
3 Standards New Zealand

Self-funded, reliant on hand-outs from others, surviving in the construction sector through the freely given time and costs of industry members, Standards New

Further, it is all too easy (and tempting) to criticise building works and common building practices some 10 to 15 years ago (knowing what we now know).

However, the assessment of whether the acts or omissions of construction parties were negligent cannot be done with the benefit of hindsight. Instead, they must be considered at the relevant time the works were carried out and, importantly, in light of the relevant industry standards and practice that were in place at that time.

Note: This article is not intended to be legal advice (nor a substitute for legal advice). No responsibility or liability is accepted by Legal Vision to anyone who relies on the information contained in this article.



Zealand still manages to do a great job.

Standards New Zealand is a critical part of our industry, and has provided support and guidance since its birth in 1930. It is somewhat poignant that Standards New Zealand was set up following the Napier earthquake, and is now working hard to support the rebuilding of Christchurch after the more recent tragic events.

4 The New Zealand Building Code

I'm serious. I may have criticised our performance-based but prescriptively driven (via acceptable solutions) code in the past, but it's a lot better than most overseas examples.

New Zealand is usually very good at choosing the best bits from overseas and, in this case, only made one really bad step.

To paraphrase a recent government proposal on online consenting systems: Over time, councils and their BCAs have developed their own interpretations of the Act. The result is a high level of inconsistency between BCAs. So, not a criticism but a question: why not change the Act to stop this happening?

5 Frank Lloyd Wright

Okay, I know he is not only American but also deceased, but Frank managed to survive not one but numerous, leaky building crises with his reputation untarnished. Unfortunately his personal life was less edifying, including being run out of Chicago for being more than friends with a client's wife.

However, many New Zealand designers and builders hold FLW in the highest regard, as much for his cheek — such as defying the Racine Council engineers when they wanted to reject his innovative mushroom-shaped column design for the Johnson Wax Building — as for his consummate design and building skills.

The eponymously titled DVD *Frank Lloyd Wright* should be compulsory viewing for all young designers and builders before they launch into the real world, to show that buildings are as much about the heart as the head. And why not?

Houston's Beer Can House

Dr Kerry Rodgers suggests a project for those contemplating retirement



If you are passing through Houston any time in the next few years, stop by 222 Malone Street. It is a tiny street. Parking can be difficult but it is well worth any effort.

Today, the entire site is a folk art monument. The house and its surrounds are encased in beer cans, the work of John Milkovisch. It is a testament to recycling — and eccentricity.

From 1968 until his death 20 years later, Milkovisch, a retired railroad upholsterer, emptied 50,000+ cans of beer and used the empties to clad his house, workshop, fence and mailbox.

It's not all beer cans. Milkovisch started out inlaying marbles, rocks, brass figures and metal pieces into concrete and redwood to decorate his gardenscape.

However, eventually he turned to the house itself and began covering it with aluminium cladding — flattened aluminium beer can cladding.

He festooned the eaves with chains and screens made of can tabs and cut-up beer cans. These caused the house to sing in the wind — as well as lowering his energy bills.

'Sick of mowing the grass'

His yard had no grass. The entire front and back was covered in concrete and, naturally, was decorated with cans. When asked why he did it, John told all and sundry: "I got sick of mowing the grass."

He never considered the decoration of his home a work of art, but simply an enjoyable pastime. His wife, Mary, who along with several neighbours, helped John empty the cans, observed: "He didn't think anybody would ever be interested in it. He just loved drinking his beer and just loved being outside and cutting up the beer cans."

And that estimate of more than 50,000 cans comes from Ripley's Believe It Or Not. That works out to a 6-pack a day for 20 years, with a few extra in the weekends.

When asked if he preferred one brand over others, John just replied: "Whatever's on special."

Today, the Beer Can House is owned and operated by the non-profit Orange Show Center for Visionary Art. You can find out more about it at www.beercanhouse.org.



The Beer Can House in Houston took John Milkovisch an average of a six-pack per day over 20 years to adorn the house with more than 50,000 cans.



Window flashings — builder not negligent

Tim Bates and Chadleigh Danswan of Auckland law firm Legal Vision review a useful decision from the High Court that was released late last year, where a builder was found not to have been negligent when installing window flashings on a residential house.



Overview

This decision is well worth a read as the court carries out a thorough assessment around the issue of liability for flashing installation — in particular, the all-important sill flashing.

Auckland Council v Lamb [2012] NZHC 2932 was a general appeal by way of a rehearing from a Weathertight Homes Tribunal decision.

The Auckland Council had conceded liability for substantial defects in the construction, and consented to the judgment in the sum of \$340,000, but sought a contribution from Mr Lamb for 80% of that sum.

The council was unsuccessful in the Tribunal and appealed to the High Court.

In 2000/2001 Mr Lamb had been contracted to install windows on a residential home (which later turned out to be a “leaky home”), including the head, jamb and sill flashings, as well as carrying out other specific work.

He was directly responsible to a project manager and site supervisor who engaged all the sub-trades, including Mr Lamb.

The emphasis of the council’s submission was that the Tribunal had overlooked clear evidence that Mr Lamb was negligent in relation to the window flashings, and

that had caused loss.

The council maintained that Mr Lamb had departed from the technical literature in installing the head and sill flashings, and that this had caused moisture ingress.

The council asserted that the Tribunal had considered a number of irrelevant factors, including the systemic failure of the stucco cladding system and Mr Lamb’s limited role in construction.

It was also submitted that the Tribunal wrongly focused on a lack of awareness in the industry generally about flashing systems, and Mr Lamb’s reliance on specific advice of council inspectors and the site supervisor, rather than his particular negligence.

The High Court’s assessment

The court addressed all three window flashings separately, namely the head, jamb and sill. Mr Lamb was found not to have been negligent in respect of all three. However, the core negligence allegation centred around whether Mr Lamb had negligently installed the sill flashings.

After noting the important role of a sill flashing (as the water flowing from the head and jamb flashings and down the window will end up at the sill flashing), Judge Asher turned to consider the specific works carried out by Mr Lamb in relation to the sill flashings.

It was agreed among the experts that there was a problem with the sill flashing which led to water ingress, in that the water that came down to the sill flashing, rather than being diverted out of the building, was leaking into the walls.

Both experts focused on the lack of any turn-up or “stop-ends” at the ends of the sill flashings to divert the water away from the inside of the walls.

Mr Lamb acknowledged that he did not use sill flashings with turn-ups or stop-ends at the end, but explained why he had not done so. He noted that a turn-up on the sill flashing would encapsulate the plaster, weakening it and causing it to break off in due course.

Rather than putting in such an uplift, he applied a line of sealant between the bottom edge of the jamb flashing and the outer edge of the sill flashing which acted in the same way as a turn-up or stop-end to direct water from flowing off the sill.

He explained that the jamb flashing overlapped the sill flashing but did not fully overlap it. He also noted that

he provided a channel through from the sill flashing to the outside, allowing the water which arrived on the sill to escape.

That channel would direct the water out of the wall to the outside of the cladding, and the silicone strip would stop it leaking into the building. Mr Lamb maintained that after he had done the work, someone had come along and blocked the drainage channels with sealant or by the application of plaster hard underneath the sill flashing which destroyed the efficiency of the water egress design, and meant that the water would flow into the wall.

The Weathertight Homes assessor noted that the relevant *Good Stucco Practice Guide* (NZS 3604, 1996 edition), did not make any reference to turn-up ends, and that the building industry had not been using turn-up stop-ends on the sill flashings at that time.

The assessor noted that stop-ends were referred to in the September 1998 BRANZ Bulletin No. 375, but that there were no specific diagrams or photographs. Judge Asher was satisfied that despite this reference to stop-ends, it was not common practice to install them in 2000 and 2001.

While the court noted that the fact that there is no industry standard on a point is not necessarily conclusive, in the end the Tribunal was right in its decision that Mr Lamb was not negligent in relation to the sill ends, and agreed with the Tribunal that there was no industry standard requiring turn-ups at the ends of the sills.

However, Judge Asher went further and noted that, even if it is now good practice to have these stop-ends, the fact that there was no general expectation for them to be installed at the time was highly relevant to the assessment of negligence.

But to be coupled with this aspect was Mr Lamb’s evidence as to the alternative channel system he put in. That was a credible explanation, and it was the sort of system that would be expected to be installed by a competent builder. Accordingly, Mr Lamb had not negligently installed the sill flashings.

Comments

The negligent installation of window flashings (or a lack of flashings altogether for that matter) are often a cause of water ingress for leaky buildings.

Combine that with the fact that incorrect flashing

Continued page 36

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Building Consents Information

For All Authorisations, December 2012

Dwellings	\$478,265,000
Domestic Outbuildings	\$8,639,000
Total Residential	\$486,904,000
Non-residential	\$339,528,000
Total All Buildings	\$826,432,000
Non-building Construction	\$35,897,000
Total Authorisations	\$862,329,000

Number of new dwellings consented

	Dec 2012	Nov 2012	Dec 2011		Dec 2012	Nov 2012	Dec 2011
Far North District	12	13	11	Horowhenua District	6	9	7
Whangarei District	39	27	21	Kapiti Coast District	18	17	9
Kaipara District	7	12	11	Porirua City	9	14	18
Rodney District	153	80	51	Upper Hutt City	6	13	11
North Shore City	27	42	85	Lower Hutt City	7	8	6
Waitakere City	82	55	21	Wellington City	65	35	140
Auckland City	54	99	68	Masterton District	1	5	0
Manukau City	39	69	35	Carterton District	5	8	0
Papakura District	56	63	17	South Wairarapa District	4	4	4
Franklin District	28	33	17	Tasman District	24	36	14
Thames-Coromandel District	12	17	12	Nelson City	18	21	9
Hauraki District	1	5	4	Marlborough District	12	18	15
Waikato District	11	28	20	Kaikoura District	3	5	1
Matamata-Piako District	7	11	5	Buller District	3	3	8
Hamilton City	70	47	55	Grey District	0	3	3
Waipa District	18	31	15	Westland District	2	3	4
Otorohanga District	2	1	4	Hurunui District	12	14	12
South Waikato District	1	1	3	Waimakariri District	78	112	55
Waitomo District	1	1	0	Christchurch City	96	142	61
Taupo District	12	18	1	Selwyn District	57	101	48
Western Bay of Plenty District	18	20	8	Ashburton District	16	18	10
Tauranga City	45	78	24	Timaru District	13	14	10
Rotorua District	8	6	6	Mackenzie District	4	5	2
Whakatane District	2	6	6	Waimate District	2	0	0
Kawerau District	0	0	0	Chatham Islands Territory	1	0	0
Opotiki District	0	2	1	Waitaki District	5	7	7
Gisborne District	15	5	7	Central Otago District	8	12	4
Wairoa District	0	0	1	Queenstown-Lakes District	41	57	20
Hastings District	12	35	7	Dunedin City	23	45	33
Napier City	10	14	12	Clutha District	2	5	5
Central Hawke's Bay District	2	1	4	Southland District	5	8	9
New Plymouth District	21	31	19	Gore District	4	3	2
Stratford District	1	2	4	Invercargill City	19	16	9
South Taranaki District	4	6	9	Area Outside TA	0	0	0
Ruapehu District	2	2	0	Total	1381	1658	1127
Wanganui District	8	8	3				
Rangitikei District	3	3	1				
Manawatu District	9	10	13				
Palmerston North City	15	14	10				
Tararua District	5	1	0				

- Based on 2006 census areas
- Each dwelling unit in a housing project is counted separately
- Figures in these tables may differ from published statistics

Source: Statistics New Zealand

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www.buildingtoday.co.nz

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