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VOLUME 29 NUMBER 1

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BUILDINGTODAY
FEBRUARY 2019 VOLUME 29 NUMBER 1

4-9
RMBA NEWS
RMBA chief executive David Kelly says the sector needs a complete reset; We profile RMB CARTERS 2018 Apprentice of the Year runner-up Corbin Mills

10-20
NEWS
New $60 million retail store will be NZ's largest; Canadian sparkies hit the H&S ground running in NZ; BuildNZ 2019 featuring a bigger range of products

22-23
PROJECTS
Heritage EQUIP is working with owners to strengthen heritage buildings nationwide

24
PRODUCTS
Enhanced thermal imagery, built-in laser-assisted distance measuring, and an indoor air quality sensor — be in with a chance to win a Cat S61 smartphone!

25
BACK IN TIME
Find out what made the headlines 20, 15, 10 and 5 years ago this month

26
BCITO NEWS
Chief executive Warwick Quinn says the Qualifications Framework review is a chance that cannot be wasted to re-position trade qualifications more fairly.

27-30
COLUMNISTS
Green not green; High Court considers council negligence for fallen tree in Queenstown; A new year — but is it a new dawn?; Too damn nice

FROM THE EDITOR

It's not long into the new year, and once again KiwiBuild has hit the headlines with the news that the Government is having to do some serious re-jigging of its planned goal of building 100,000 houses in 10 years. This will come as no surprise to industry experts and others who doubted the unrealistic target from day one.

The recent departure of KiwiBuild unit head Stephen Barclay hasn't help matters, and it's all resulted in fewer than 100 homes being completed since June last year.

Meanwhile, RMBA chief executive David Kelly reveals in this issue that he thinks the construction sector needs a complete reset, and that he's found participants in the commercial sector to be dissatisfied and unhappy with their lot. These are some of the challenges that must be overcome during 2019.

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Construction sector needs complete reset

Chief's Chat

By CEO David Kelly

There's no doubt the construction sector has been experiencing sustained growth for a while now.

Statistics New Zealand shows the value of residential building work for the September 2018 quarter was $3.8 billion, up 5.1% from the September 2017 quarter.

Even more impressive, the value of non-residential work rose 7.9% for the same period to $2.1 billion.

These levels of private and public construction work should provide a degree of medium-to-long-term certainty for the wider sector. It should also provide exciting opportunities for business and staff development, and innovation.

Yet the consensus from the recent Society of Construction Law (SCL) seminars held around the country, which I was asked to chair, suggests the commercial sector is at a crossroads.

Participants, including developers, building owners, construction companies and the lawyers representing them spoke of a sector with a breakdown of trust between parties.

I don't want to be the harbinger of doom and gloom, but there was a sense of feeling trapped in the current system, with all parties feeling powerless to make any real change.

More worrying for me, were the informal chats I had with participants about not finding the commercial sector fun or satisfying to work in anymore.

These chats indicated to me a recurring theme — frustrations and stresses were driving people away from the sector at the very time we need more people to participate.

These sorts of discussions can be the catalyst for change. We all need to step up and play our part.

Systemic change won't be easy, but I think over the long term we can achieve positive outcomes that provide beneficial outcomes for the commercial sector.

As a starter for 10, my key areas of focus are:

1 Rebuilding trust

The current system can set us up to fail from the start, by putting all parties in an adversarial environment with each other, rather than working as true partners.

We need to focus on the same objective — quality buildings, delivered on time for a fair price, with fair margins. Projects should be contributing to strengthening the sector and supporting innovation and growth.

The system's current adversarial environment isn't allowing us to share this focus. Focusing on a common objective will allow us to rebuild trust.

2 Setting clear principles

All parties need to change — clients, contractors, subcontractors, developers and lawyers. All parties also need to take leadership and set clear principles for their role in transforming the sector.

The Vertical Construction Leaders Group is already making significant strides in this, with the development of a draft strategy for commercial contractors.

We have already developed Lead Contractor Guidelines, and we are now establishing a set of principles outlining how to manage risk, and how to build capability in key areas such as project management.

Risk management is fundamental in our industry, and it needs to be transparent and fair. There must be a standardisation of risk schedules that focuses on the long-term value of the project, not just the short-term transaction.

We are urging other industry groups to champion their own principles for their respective areas. This will establish clear expectations across the sector.

3 Building capabilities together

Parties need to work together to build capabilities in the sector. The construction process is much more complex than it used to be, and quality project management has become an even more essential role.

Equally, fostering quality management within construction businesses is essential in a competitive and increasingly complex environment.

We need to grow our talent pool and share our knowledge with others. This will require working together to discuss training, to share insights, and to attract new people into the commercial sector.

4 Standard conditions of contract

Contract provisions and special conditions are one of the many drivers reinforcing current behaviour in the industry.

We believe there is a need to revisit NZ3910 to ensure all contracts have standard conditions and risk is fairly and transparently allocated.

We launched our Lead Contractor Guidelines at last year's Constructive Forum to help ensure contractors understand the risk they are taking on when they sign contracts.

5 Quality marks and accreditation

I believe the sector should focus on an accreditation scheme whereby construction companies must meet a minimum standard before considering pricing.

This would include a weighted assessment of balance sheets, history, governance and capabilities. These are areas where government procurement could lead.

Ultimately, this could also help to incentivise companies to invest in innovation and training.

6 Stopping the brain drain

There are too many stories of people walking away from the sector because they are not finding the current environment enjoyable or satisfying to work in.

For the long-term health of the sector, we need to be ensuring these people stay, gain experience, and become future leaders. A continued brain drain will undermine the capability, capacity and effectiveness of the commercial sector.

There's a lot of short, medium, and long-term work to do, but I am confident.

We need to be working together not to just improve the health of our sector, but to deliver better homes, better workplaces and, ultimately, better lives for all New Zealanders.

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Multiple national category winner finally nails Supreme Award

Christchurch company Metzger Builders Ltd (MBL) was awarded the coveted title of Registered Master Builders 2018 Supreme House of the Year with their Redwood home.

They also took out the national category win for the New Home over $2 million Award and the Plumbing World Bathroom Excellence Award.

Metzger Builders Ltd's Rick Leftly was very proud of the company's achievements, crediting their win to the incredible team and clients on the project.

"We were quite surprised as there were some amazing houses in the awards. To not only win the national category, but the bathroom award and the Supreme Award was fantastic," he says.

Mr Leftly says the design of the house and the picturesque grounds made the house stand out, but it was a complex build.

"The design of the house is amazing, and it sits perfectly on a large block of land with trees all around. It's a lovely, well-lived in, well-used family home," he says.

"The client's brief was for a home that worked well for their growing family, and it certainly does that.

"This was a difficult build, as the house has internal gutters, drains and stormwater, a huge amount of steel, a lot of engineering, and a hand-pitched roof. But the great thing about this is that it is all hidden, so it looks really cool."

Judges were impressed with Metzger Builders Ltd's (MBL) clever and balanced design, with their home showing a considered approach in every respect.

"The large home sits boldly on a rural site, but peacefully in its landscaped environment. The impeccable crafting and attention to detail demonstrated by the builders and subcontractors is truly exceptional.

"The collaboration between client, architect and builder has made this a home that perfectly suits the needs of the growing family. It is a well deserving winner of this award."

The company has been entering House of the Year for more than 11 years, but this is their first national Supreme win.

Christchurch company Metzger Builders Ltd (MBL) was awarded the coveted title of Registered Master Builders 2018 Supreme House of the Year with this Redwood home. They also took out the national category win for the New Home over $2 million Award and the Plumbing World Bathroom Excellence Award.

"We have been awarded 11 national awards, and a regional Supreme Award, so a Supreme Award at the National Awards was the ultimate goal," Mr Leftly says.

"Our staff are so passionate about what we do, and these awards feed that passion. We all want to strive to do the best work and achieve a quality product."

Mr Leftly says being a Registered Master Builder gives their clients peace of mind about the workmanship of projects.

"Clients have added confidence knowing they are dealing with a company that has to prove themselves to Registered Master Builders to become a member.

"Registered Master Builders is a trusted brand, and they represent the same values we hold at Metzger Builders Ltd."

House of the Year is made possible through the support of Altus, Bunnings Trade, CARTERS, GIB, Master Build 10-Year Guarantee, PlaceMakers, Plumbing World and Resene.

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Seasoned House of the Year entrant wins Supreme Award

Christchurch's Takahe Construction Ltd won the title of Registered Master Builders 2018 Renovation of the Year with their superb renovation of a Merivale home.

The company also took out the national category win for the Renovation over $1 million Award and the Outdoor Living Award.

Takahe Construction directors were incredibly humbled with their Supreme win.

"We took the whole project team up to Auckland for the Awards. It was a real privilege to win an award we have always been striving for as a company," they said.

"When we first started our company 10 years ago, one of the biggest reasons we joined Registered Master Builders was the House of the Year Awards.

"We knew they would help our own brand, and we loved the fact we could use them to advertise our quality work.

"The only way to give yourself a point of difference in the industry is to be recognised for quality, and House of the Year allows us to do that."

Takahe Construction directors say the high level of finishes made the house stand out from its competitors.

"The main brief was to bring this 1990s home up to date with modern technology, and to add entertainment spaces.

"The house has a fantastic alfresco area, with an outdoor kitchen that includes a chef's barbeque, oscillating TV, heat-scope heaters in the ceiling, retracting louvres, and a glass gas fire. That area was very important for the owners with their style of living, and I think we did it justice."

Judges remarked on the amazing quality of the renovation, which was extensively damaged in the Christchurch earthquakes.

"Originally built in the 1990s, the client chose to engage the original architect to complete a full re-design, whilst retaining the elegance of the original home.

"A collaborative approach between client, architect, engineer and builder made this project a success. The quality demonstrated in the re-build work and the overall renovation is a credit to the team involved.

Christchurch's Takahe Construction Ltd won the title of Registered Master Builders 2018 Renovation of the Year with their superb renovation of this Merivale home.

"This is truly a spectacular home which the builder should be extremely proud of."

Takahe Construction has entered House of the Year before, but this is their first Supreme Award.

"We have entered five houses over a 10-year period which have all won Gold Awards, with a couple winning the regional category awards.

"This year was our first Supreme win, which was fantastic. The whole project was a great experience from start to finish."

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Second-time Apprentice of the Year entrant walks away with national award

Perseverance paid off for New Plymouth's Corbin Mills, when he was awarded second place at the Registered Master Builders CARTERS 2018 Apprentice of the Year competition.

Corbin, who is employed by B D Hill Building Ltd, and trained through the Building and Construction Industry Training Organisation (BCITO), says he was surprised to place second in the competition.

"I definitely wasn't expecting it. I entered just to challenge myself, see where I stood against other people in my position, and just to enjoy the experience. It was awesome to come away with something at the end of it," he says.

"I made it through to the regional finals in 2017, and one of the judges said I should give it another go the following year, so I did. I definitely felt a lot more confident in my work the second time around, and knew I had nothing to lose."

Corbin says getting to spend time with the other competitors was a highlight of the competition.

"There are heaps of benefits from being in the competition. Getting to know all the other apprentices was one of them. We got to know each other really well and we still keep in touch.

"Along with that, meeting others in the industry and getting to attend the House of the Year awards gala dinner was great."

Corbin says the most challenging part of the competition was the practical challenge in Auckland. The finalists were tasked with building a complex garden station that put their skills to the test.

"The practical challenge was definitely difficult. The time pressure and the atmosphere is not something we're used to as builders, and it's not something you can really prepare for."

Judges said Corbin excelled throughout the competition, and showed a good understanding of the building process.

New Plymouth's Corbin Mills was awarded second-place at the Registered Master Builders CARTERS 2018 Apprentice of the Year competition.

"Corbin had an excellent written submission and interview, and demonstrated his great communication skills," they said.

"We were very impressed with his ability to develop meaningful customer relationships. His project was a very challenging one, and he definitely understood his client and their needs.

"Corbin has a bright future ahead of him, and we look forward to seeing how his career progresses."

Corbin has always had an interest in working with his hands and being in the outdoors from a young age, and first gave building a go at school.

"I tried my hand at building in the Gateway Programme at high school for two years and really enjoyed it.

"I love building and I can't see myself doing anything else. Eventually I would like to pursue other areas of the industry and teach others the trade skills."

Corbin says this award is great for getting your name out there, and encourages others to apply as you have nothing to lose.

"It's nice to be recognised for the hard work you've done, and is a great addition to the CV. You have nothing to lose and everything to gain from it.

"If you're lucky enough to get through to the finals, it's a great experience, and the prizes are awesome. More people should be putting their name down for it!"

The Registered Master Builders Apprentice of the Year competition is made possible thanks to principal sponsor CARTERS, the Building and Construction Industry Training Organisation (BCITO), and supporting sponsor the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment (MBIE).

Simon Construction sets new standards for luxury in retirement village living

Simon Construction was recognised for its excellent workmanship and finish at the 2018 New Zealand Commercial Project Awards.

They took home a Gold Award and category win for the Allied Concrete Value $5 million to $15 million. The company also won a Gold Award for a second project in the Heritage/ Restoration category.

This project saw the company successfully complete Christchurch's Russley Village Homestead, a multi-purpose building for residents of the retirement village.

The building has areas purpose-built for entertainment and socialising, including a boutique cinema with tiered seats, a cafe, and brasserie.

There is also a library, study, computer area, an arts and crafts space, hair salon and wellness rooms for health professionals.

Simon Construction's Izaac Simon said the project was challenging due to the nature of the site, and the time constraints of the build.

"Given that we were working within an existing retirement village, it was definitely difficult. We had to make sure all health and safety aspects were managed appropriately, ensuring no residents accidentally wandered onto the site," he says.

"We were also working in a tight time frame, but we managed to push through and get it done, which was really pleasing."

The competition judges were impressed with the quality of finish, especially considering the challenges of the site.

"This was a very restricted site, in the centre of an occupied retirement village, and adjacent to another project being constructed by a different contractor," the judges said.

"The building successfully conveys a 'country club' atmosphere, incorporating community activities such as the cafe, restaurant, lounge, and snooker room.

"The workmanship is exemplary throughout, and the finish is of the highest level,

Simon Construction was recognised for its excellent workmanship and finish at the 2018 New Zealand Commercial Project Award, taking home a Gold Award and category win for the Allied Concrete Value $5 million to $15 million.

incorporating bespoke features and imported materials and fixtures.

"The building sits comfortably within its context, and it is an excellent addition to the retirement village."

2018 was the first time Simon Construction had entered the competition, and they were extremely surprised to walk away with a win.

Mr Simon says it recognises the hard work the team put in to their trade, and the quality finish of their output.

"Winning this award was a great surprise. It gives us more credibility with our peers and within the construction industry. We were up against some good companies with some talented people, so to have this win under our belt is awesome.

"For a small company like ours that is family-based and managed, to be able to stand on an equal footing with some of our peers was pretty cool. We've been in business for over 30 years, and it's always been about producing the best outcome and finished products for our clients," he says.

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New $60 million retail store will be NZ's largest

A new $60 million retail store with a floor space larger than three rugby fields is set to open in Henderson, Auckland. Nido, a furniture, furnishing, homeware and lifestyle store, will employ more than 200 staff, and carry more than 10,000 product lines.

A new $60 million retail store with a floor space larger than three rugby fields is set to open in Auckland.

Nido, a furniture, furnishing, homeware and lifestyle store, will employ more than 200 staff, and carry more than 10,000 product lines.

The store will open after nine years of research into the most innovative retail models from around the world, and will house 80 exclusive brands, with more than 100 display rooms to be continuously updated.

Managing director Vinod Kumar says the scale and style of the offering will be unlike anything most Kiwis have encountered before.

"Carrying thousands of mainly European and US products, Nido will cater for the wide range of budgets and tastes across the local market," Mr Kumar says.

"Kiwi shoppers will be able to access the latest products, technology and global design trends.

"At 27,000 square metres, this will be largest retail operation in the country and, for those outside of Auckland, we will offer online shopping functionality through our web site."

He says New Zealanders will be able to shop online prior to the opening of the bricks and mortar store. The company will partner with a logistics supplier to provide nationwide distribution for its product lines.

Mr Kumar, who has been twice voted New Zealand Retailer of the Year, says Nido is entirely New Zealand-owned and operated.

"Nido will be funded through commercial property investment Maat Group by dozens of local investors from around the country who believe the market is ready for a new retail concept," he says.

Construction on the more than 31,000 square metre site at 158 Central Park Drive, Henderson, began in October 2018, and is expected to be completed around spring of this year.

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ACC fund for health and safety improvements needs targeting

The recently-announced $22 million ACC fund to support the small-to-medium enterprise (SME) sector in reducing workplace injuries should help, according to the Employers and Manufacturers Association (EMA).

However, it will need careful monitoring and targeting to ensure it brings about the hoped-for benefits.

The EMA chief executive Kim Campbell says the creation of the fund acknowledges the sometimes significant costs SMEs could face to implement best practice accident and injury controls in the workplace.

"In some industries and sectors those costs are quite high, and many SMEs struggle with finding the funding to invest in those controls," Mr Campbell says.

"So we welcome the fund as very helpful assistance for these businesses to keep their workers safe."

ACC Minister Iain Lees-Galloway has announced that $4.4 million per year would be made available through grants and subsidies over the next five years to help the SME sector reduce accidents and injuries in the workplace.

"We applaud the availability of subsidies for undertaking workforce training — we run many health and safety training programmes at the EMA," Mr Campbell says.

"But in addition, ACC might get good bang for its (the tax payer's) buck by a targeted approach focused on technology and innovation that will save future injury costs.

"There have been other schemes in the past that targeted the sector and, for various reasons, they have been shut down.

"What we need to ensure is that the grants and subsidies are provided to industries and sectors where risks are higher, so that the reduction in accident costs that ACC believes will come about as a result of the scheme do actually occur.

"That might mean targeting sectors such as construction, forestry, manufacturing, healthcare and social assistance where there are known risks or higher accident rates, and using the grants and subsidies to pay for innovative systems or new technology that might otherwise be inaccessible to those in the SME sector because of their tight access to funding," Mr Campbell says.

Site Safe chief executive Brett Murray says the ACC fund is welcome news.

"The creation of the new incentive programme recognises the high, sometimes prohibitive, costs faced by many of the SMEs who are eager to improve health and safety in their businesses.

"In an industry like construction, investing in health and safety can be expensive, and many SMEs struggle to find the funds to invest in best practice controls and systems," he says.

"And although we have made some real gains in health and safety in construction, injuries in our sector still account for a large number of ACC's severe injury claims.

"These new subsidies support investment in areas which we believe are vital to reducing injuries in the workplace — and it's good to see that the Minister, Iain Lees-Galloway, recognises the need to target the five key sectors with the greatest injury rates."

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Government yet to fill gap in infrastructure pipeline

Short-term gaps in the infrastructure pipeline are causing long-term headaches for civil infrastructure contractors, who have criticised a vague forward work programme that sees roading projects down nearly $3 billion in the next two years.

Civil Contractors New Zealand chief executive Peter Silcock says despite promises of "record investment" and a "year of action" from the Government, poor visibility over new projects coming to market was starting to have a serious impact.

As projects such as Auckland's northern and southern corridor improvements, the Waikato Expressway, Peka Peka to Otaki and Transmission Gully wind down, these should be replaced by the next wave.

But the only major NZTA projects confirmed so far were the $360 million SH1 Papakura to Bombay improvements, and the Manawatu Gorge Replacement, with a much smaller than anticipated range of small regional improvements, Mr Silcock says.

While it was understandable a new Land Transport Policy Statement would need some adjustment time, it was also important for new projects to come to market in a reasonable time frame, he says.

"An about-turn of infrastructure policy was always going to be challenging. The reality is we have not seen the promised array of small-to-medium sized regional improvements come to market, or had a reasonable indication of when much of the work will begin."

Regions long overlooked

New Zealand's regions had long been overlooked, and would welcome a new selection of roading work to replace the former Roads of National Significance projects, in addition to new funding sources from the Provincial Growth Fund, he says.

The lack of a clear roading work programme was just one delay, with many areas seeming to be eternally in discussion or under review.

Although the country desperately needed to improve coastal infrastructure resilience, water and broadband networks, the Government also had to deliver a coherent water infrastructure work programme following the Three Waters Review and the creation of a new independent infrastructure body.

Counter-productive delays

Despite some massive projects across the Auckland region such as the Central Interceptor and Auckland Transport Alignment Project, arguments over how to proceed and reluctance to consider alternative funding models were causing counter-productive delays when the city was playing catch-up and improvements were needed, he says.

"We know there's a lot of work to be done, and we want to be able to get on with it.

"The country's skilled workforce of civil construction workers is ready and waiting, and New Zealand needs work happening on the ground here and now rather than over the horizon."

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Mitre 10 NZ chief executive Cowie resigns

Mitre 10 (New Zealand) Ltd chief executive officer Neil Cowie has resigned.

Chairman Martin Dippie says Mr Cowie has led the company through a time of impressive growth, and has ensured the company is in an excellent position for the future.

"Neil has been a pleasure to work with. He has a real passion for retail, and has thrived in our co-operative environment by building strong and genuine relationships with our members and suppliers alike," Mr Dippie says.

"I believe his greatest achievement has been his contribution to the future vision for Mitre 10 and building a really strong executive leadership team to deliver this."

Mr Cowie says it has been a privilege to serve the Mitre 10 Co-operative over the past five years, but that it is time for him to take a break before he considers his next step.

"These past five years have undoubtedly been the most enjoyable and satisfying years of my retail career to date," Mr Cowie says.

Former Mitre 10 (New Zealand) Ltd chief executive officer Neil Cowie.

"Very few leaders get the opportunity to preside over more than $600 million of growth during their tenure.

"I am particularly proud of the unique culture we have created at Mitre 10 which I believe has helped to create sustainable value to our member shareholders, as well as being a great place for people to come and work each day.

"I'm looking forward to taking a break and spending some quality time with my family while I consider what my next step may be," he says.

Chief financial officer Matthew Washington has been appointed as acting chief executive officer while the Board commences an international search for a successor.

"Neil will be working with the Board to ensure a seamless handover to Matthew who, alongside the executive leadership team, will continue to deliver on a business-as-usual basis while we conduct our international search," Mr Dippie says.

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Canadian sparkies hit the H&S ground running in NZ

Site Safe is doing its bit to help alleviate New Zealand's shortage of skilled tradies.

As part of its partnership with international tradespeople exchange provider Global Trade eXchange, or GTeXpro, Site Safe is working to ensure tradies entering New Zealand are equipped with entry-level health and safety training before they arrive, meaning they hit the ground running and are ready to work safely.

So far the programme has started being rolled out to electricians in Canada as this is an in-demand trade which appears on New Zealand's Long Term Skills Shortage List.

Site Safe chief executive Brett Murray says the partnership is part of ensuring that highly sought after and skilled workers, such as electricians, were work-ready on their arrival.

"By delivering Site Safe training in advance, we are working to provide a smooth transition for these workers, and making sure there are no delays from our end," Mr Murray says.

"This is great news for those employers taking part in the programme, who benefit from taking on staff who have a solid understanding of Kiwi health and safety expectations."

The initiative is part of the Commonwealth eXchange program, which was developed to provide pathways for skilled tradespeople to expand their knowledge by working between different countries.

The first batch of Canadian electricians to be upskilled for New Zealand under the direction of international tradespeople exchange provider Global Trade eXchang. The training was done at the Electrical Joint Training Committees head office in Vancouver.

This, in turn, should support the long-term sustainability of skills in the sector by providing increased work mobility through times of peaks and troughs in different countries.

GTeXpro international electrical assessor Leon Zaffiris says providing quality training and knowledge in advance helps the new arrivals to be successful when working in Kiwi workplaces.

The first group of Canadian electricians is due to start work in New Zealand this month.

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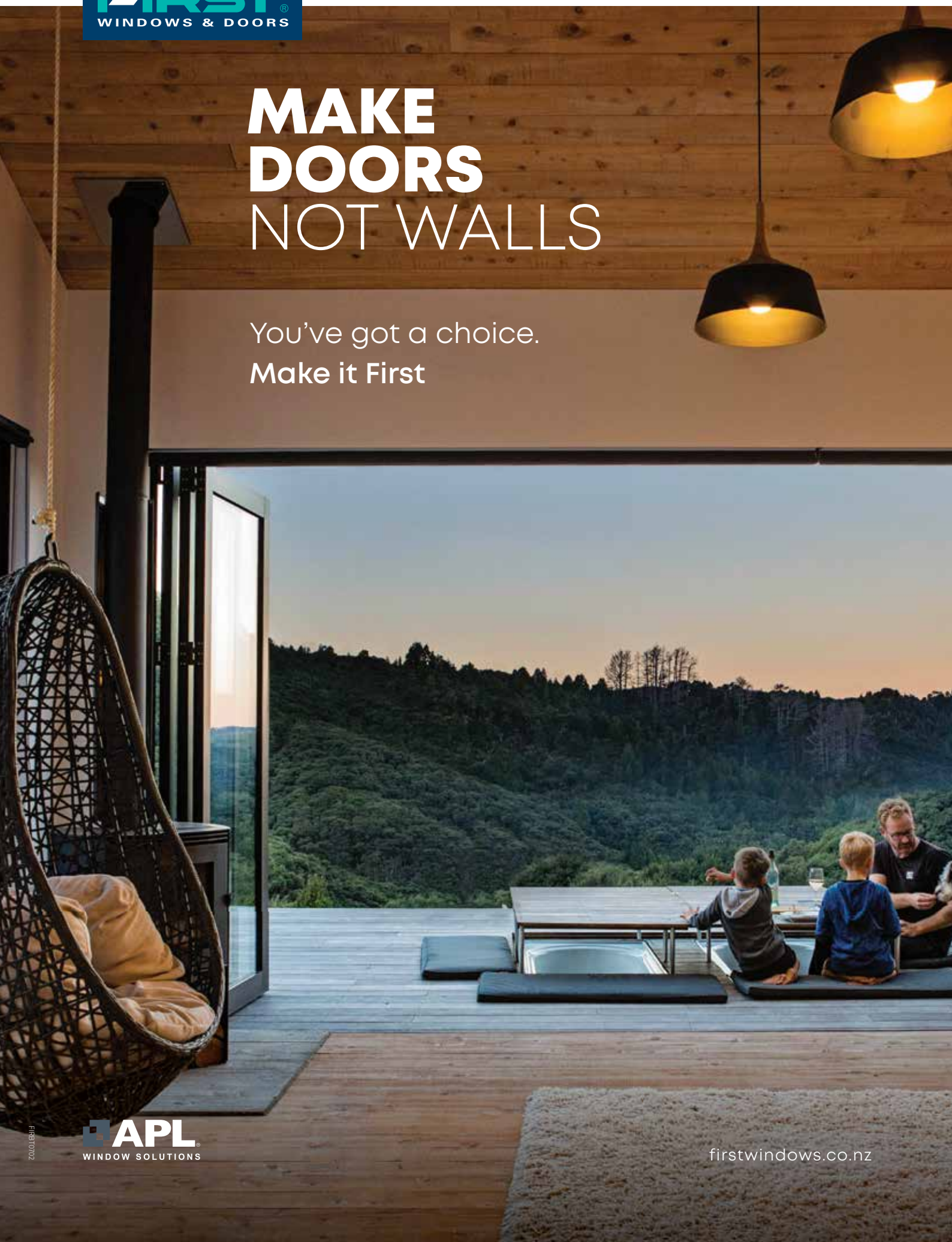
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Industry trade show featuring an expanded array of products, seminars

KiwiBuild Summit returning to BuildNZ 2019

BuildNZ, already the country's largest trade show for the build, design and construction industries, is gaining welcomed scale in 2019 with the return of the Kiwibuild Summit.

The event will run in Auckland on June 23 to 25, 2019, and its New Zealand owners are looking forward to welcoming more than 200 exhibitors and more than 5000 pan-industry visitors.

The three-day event will play host to a number of new and returning features, including the KiwiBuild Summit sponsored by Bunnings Trade.

Off the back of a successful KiwiBuild Summit launch at BuildNZ last year, Minister of Housing and Urban Development Phil Twyford has confirmed his attendance again for 2019.

MC Patrick Gower will be back to mediate a series of leadership panel discussions with New Zealand's industry chief executives and influencers.

Live streamed by the *New Zealand Herald* and other media, the July 2018 KiwiBuild Summit attracted a capacity crowd as the Minister made a series of media announcements before panellists debated the mechanisms to collaborate and deliver on KiwiBuild to achieve 100,000 homes in just 10 years.

It generated a unique insight into the industry's confidence in Government and industry chief executives, with live interactive polls and Q&A enabling attendees to ask the tough questions.

2018 commitments revisited

The outcome from the past summit included a White Paper submission back to Mr Twyford and Minister for Building and Construction Jenny Salesa, so 2019 provides an opportunity to revisit those commitments, as well as testing the progress being made with KiwiBuild.

Anyone in the industry wanting a copy of the White Paper as presented to the Minister following the KiwiBuild Summit can send a request to info@buildnz.com.

BuildNZ events director Tony Waite says the industry made it clear it wants to design and build communities, not slums, that there's a need to fast track compliance, it wants clarity over new standards being adopted by Kiwibuild, it wants to understand what role prefabrication will play, and it wants to know how its businesses can qualify to deliver on Kiwibuild.

"There's a lot of industry apprehension and concern about KiwiBuild," Mr Waite says.

Fabulous opportunity

"On one side there's a fabulous opportunity for the industry and nation as a whole to, for instance, lead considered design and green/eco building structures in planned communities. There's also potential to make a mess of it," he says.

Minister Twyford says last year was a fantastic trade show that brought together the most interesting and innovative suppliers from across the construction industry.

Mr Gower said he was totally blown away by the industry's desire to collaborate and get KiwiBuild done — and not just done, but done well.

The BuildNZ team is planning content for the Summit in consultation with the industry, and will be announcing the topics and line-up of speakers in the coming months.

Registrations for this year's KiwiBuild Summit will be open shortly.

In addition to the Summit, 2019 sees an expanded array of exhibition product at BuildNZ, including the feature Designex destination with suppliers showcasing interior design, textiles, lighting, appliances and furnishing.

The new Business Growth Hub is an area dedicated to helping businesses develop skills around recruitment — for example, getting the right workforce, and developing skills and support structures to retain good staff — something vital to the industry's future.

Along with PrefabNZ, the Innovation Quarter returns, showcasing some of the latest innovations the industry has to offer.

And with three full days of Continued Professional Development and Licensed Building Practitioner-accredited seminars, BuildNZ is guaranteed to appeal to everyone serious about the industry.

Thousands of qualified and audited visitors from across the industry, including builders, designers, architects, specifiers and developers, will have a chance to explore the latest product innovations and new technologies that are shaping the future of the industry.

View the BuildNZ 2018 video highlights at www.buildnz.com (including an exclusive interview with Minister Twyford).

If you are interested in exhibiting, contact exhibition sales manager Heather Lowrie on 021 599 929, or email heather@xpo.co.nz.

Visitors can register to attend for free at www.buildnz.com.

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Working together to strengthen heritage

By Elizabeth Bush-King, Ministry for Culture and Heritage

It's been two years since Heritage EQUIP was launched in New Zealand. The $12 million programme was created to help private owners of heritage buildings undertake earthquake strengthening.

Since then, $4.9 million of funding has been allocated to projects across the country.

Heritage EQUIP, a national earthquake upgrade incentive programme, is managed by Manatū Taonga Ministry for Culture and Heritage.

It offers funding and advice for seismic strengthening of heritage buildings, with funding of up to 50% of seismic strengthening costs available for projects of all sizes.

Since its launch in 2016, the scheme has supported almost 30 upgrade projects.

Getting funding to regional centres is especially important, as seismic strengthening can be expensive. Owners in regional areas face a range of unique challenges, but the most pressing are lower building rents and values that often don't justify the upgrade expense, and a shortage of locally available professional advice.

"One of the problems that keeps coming up when we talk to building owners in smaller towns is the difficulty they're having finding the right professionals to do the work," Heritage EQUIP fund manager Mike Frew says.

"This could be organising a structural engineer, or finding an architect with good heritage

Heritage EQUIP in action: the A E Kitchen

The A E Kitchen building is a commercial heritage building located on Victoria Avenue, right in the heart of Whanganui. Its Edwardian Baroque style makes it a feature of the city's streetscape.

Owner Kerry Girdwood undertook a major project to restore and strengthen the building, and now lives in the upper floor apartment, while two shops occupy the ground floor.

Whanganui-based Registered Master Builder DML Construction was appointed as the lead building contractor for the project.

Owner Keryn Amon and project manager Paul Chapman say the A E Kitchen building has been one of the most rewarding projects they've worked on.

"Kerry's plans were bold, but they definitely paid off, and it's been a real success story.

"The building is special because of its history and stunning facade, but this project meant we were also able to create a special home for the owner," Mr Amon says.

"It was a pleasure to work directly with Kerry, Bruce Dickson the architect, and structural and seismic engineers EQ Struc, because nothing was prescribed — the project had a genuine collegial atmosphere.

"As project managers, we were also able to implement best practice value management, which helped to keep costs down.

"Seeing the joy on Kerry's face when the restoration was complete was a highlight," Mr Chapman says.

"She wanted a safe, secure, inner-city environment to live in, and she has it, along with two commercial tenancies."

The impressive A E Kitchen building in Whanganui, which was built in 1909. Owner Kerry Girdwood received Heritage EQUIP funding to strengthen its prominent facade and significant seismic strengthening.
Image: New Zealand Herald, ref: WIC-1007706

The superb quality of the restoration is such that it won a silver award in the Heritage and Restoration category of the 2018 New Zealand Commercial Project Awards.

When Ms Girdwood began the restoration process, she knew the building needed significant seismic strengthening.

This included strengthening of the perimeter masonry walls and parapets, and for the connections between the roof and walls.

She worked with her structural engineers to adapt their original strengthening design, which she thought was too intrusive and didn't factor in the resilience of native timber floors.

The final stage of the strengthening project was to strengthen the ornate facade. When scaffolding went up outside, she got an unpleasant surprise.

On closer inspection, it was more fragile than initially thought, and more work was needed to strengthen it, meaning the budget for the facade had to be tripled. Funding from Heritage EQUIP helped her complete the job.

One of the major challenges the owner and DML Construction faced was time. Originally,

buildings nationwide

experience. To help address this situation, we've created new Professional Advice Grants for building owners in regional, medium and high seismic risk areas, who are right at the beginning of the upgrade process.

"These grants can be used to obtain detailed seismic assessments, or architectural or seismic design advice.

"So often, it's good early advice that ensures building owners have viable, cost-effective upgrade options," Mr Frew says.

In addition, consultants, councils and heritage trusts are encouraged to bring building owners together and co-ordinate advice and upgrade projects for multiple buildings.

The Ministry hopes that by combining efforts to find project scale, advice and works costs will decrease.

The Ministry is also trialling a partnership approach with a small number of councils, with the aim of supporting their work with building owners.

By working with councils, the Ministry hopes to reach more building owners and encourage larger-scale, co-ordinated earthquake-strengthening projects.

Building owners, councils and consultants interested in applying for funding can email heritage.equip@mch.govt.nz, or call 04 499 4229 and ask for the Heritage EQUIP team.

Applications are assessed three times a year. Full information about how to apply is available at www.heritageequip.govt.nz.

building, Whanganui

Facade strengthening. *Image: DML Construction*

Above and right: As part of the project, an extension was added to the rear of the building.
Image: DML Construction

the entire project was expected to take between four and six months, but it eventually took more than a year.

"The access to the site was another big challenge," Mr Chapman says.

"It's a very narrow building, only eight metres wide, with a party wall on one side, and the other neighbouring wall very close by.

"We had to bring in heavy, bulky steel and install new foundations, for example, all in a very confined space. Everything had to be done inside the building — there was no room to bring in a crane!"

On top of that, a team of five or six builders would be on-site each day, along with various other trades, since all the building's systems, including heating, water and electrics, were modernised.

Good working relationship

"A real feather in the cap for us was having a good working relationship with the local council and the designer, which meant the final product suited the mixed-use nature of the building.

"For example, we were able to install new accessible toilets in the middle of the building, so that the owners and the commercial tenants could share access.

"We also facilitated an effective fire safety system for the entire building, resulting in three separate fire cells, which meant Kerry's residential apartment and staircase could be kept entirely separate from the downstairs shops," Mr Chapman says.

Despite the challenges, Ms Girdwood doesn't regret doing the very best by the building, and recommends Heritage EQUIP to other owners of heritage buildings.

"I'd say to other building owners, do it. You will have to do it soon anyway, and I understand the queue for seismic assessments and structural design is lengthening," she says.

"Don't be put off by the thought it's going to be expensive. It's less expensive than it might otherwise be if you have Heritage EQUIP help."

Flagship Cat S61 rugged smartphone launched in NZ

Cat phones has launched its flagship device, the Cat S61, in New Zealand. The S61 is the upgrade to the Cat S60, and includes enhanced FLIR thermal imaging capability, built-in laser-assisted distance measuring, and an indoor air quality sensor.

The device was purpose-built to meet the demands of people with outdoor lifestyles, whether that be for work or leisure.

It is ideal for those in architecture, engineering and construction, or anyone who enjoys outdoor activities such as fishing, hiking, boating and biking.

The Cat S61 boasts an integrated FLIR thermal imaging camera with enhanced software for greater image contrast, expanded temperature range to 400° Celsius, and an upgrade from VGA to High-Definition detail from the visible camera, providing unmatched image optimisation using FLIR's MSX technology.

These new features and enhancements help enable a new and expanded set of users where portability, connectivity and greater image quality are necessary.

Vehicle diagnostics, asphalt monitoring and higher temperature equipment monitoring are now possible with the Cat S61, in addition to the many traditional uses that include:

- detecting heat loss around windows and doors,
- spotting moisture and missing insulation,
- identifying overheating electrical appliances and overloaded circuitry, and
- seeing in complete darkness or through obscurants such as light fog or smoke.

The MyFlir application has also been upgraded on the Cat S61. New, sought-after features include live streaming of thermal imaging, on-device "Tips and Tricks", and a "Community Forum" to help users get the most out of the S61's thermal imaging capabilities.

It also includes an indoor air quality sensor from Sensirion to alert users to high levels of indoor air pollutants (Volatile Organic Compounds or VOCs) in their working environment.

Common sources of VOCs include paints, solvents, carpets, furniture and cleaning products, all common in the environments typical to Cat phone users.

The Cat S61 will keep watch over indoor air quality levels, and inform users when an unhealthy environment is detected, allowing them to make timely decisions such as opening a window to improve ventilation, or taking a break. The sensor can also provide humidity and current temperature readings.

The Cat S61 comes with laser-assisted distance measurement which can measure point-to-point distances up to 10 metres, then calculate area. It can also switch between Metric and Imperial measurement.

All data is saved within the image so alternative measurement estimates can be taken, or adjustments made without returning to the site.

This combination of features is highly valued by Cat phones customers. Electricians, for example, can use thermal imaging to analyse a fuse box or wiring system, and the laser-assisted distance measurement to estimate how much cable is required for the job.

They can also live stream results back to base should they need further advice from a colleague.

The handset has a large 5.2in FHD screen, protected by Gorilla Glass 5 and optimised for outdoor use.

It also boasts leading rugged credentials. It is IP68 dustproof, and is waterproof up to three metres deep for one hour. It conforms to MIL Spec 810G, and it is built to survive repeated drop tests onto concrete from 1.8 metres.

All these features are important to Cat phone customers who often use their phones to read and format plans and invoices while out on the job.

"Cat's rugged phones have been incredibly well received in New Zealand, and we are delighted to add the S61, our flagship model, to our offering in the region," Bullitt Group chief executive officer Peter Stephens says.

"The temperature and resolution improvements found in the Cat S61 will open up thermal imaging to many more users, and its unrivalled in-built tools of the trade mean we are confident that it'll go down a storm," Mr Stephens says.

"We are thrilled to be delivering a rugged phone of the Cat S61's class to New Zealanders," PB Tech sales and marketing general manager Mark Dalton says.

"Its advanced thermal imaging capability, built-in laser-assisted distance measuring, and an indoor air quality sensor make it one of the most sought-after rugged phones on the market!"

The Cat S61 is available for $1599 online from PB Tech or Caterpillar dealership Gough throughout New Zealand.

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Imagine fronting up to work sporting a Cat S61 rugged smartphone! Building Today has scored one of these beauties, worth $1500, to give away to one lucky reader!

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To enter, visit www.buildingtoday.co.nz/competitions. Good luck!

BT's Back in Time

20 years ago — February 1999:

• Twenty thousand copies of a flyer promoting construction safety organisation Site Safe were distributed throughout the industry.

It folded into a tent shape, with recipients encouraged to leave it in an obvious place such as a smoko room, to help raise awareness of the fledgling organisation, and its mission of "working with you to make your site safe".

The flyer pointed out that workplace accidents were costing the construction industry more than $100 million annually.

15 years ago — February 2004:

• The largest museum redevelopment project in the Southern Hemisphere was set to increase the Auckland Museum's space by a staggering 60%.

The $53.2 million project included state-of-the-art visitor amenities, a new education centre, international-standard exhibition halls, a theatre, events centre and a 204-car underground car park, as well as badly-needed facilities for the museum's collections, workshops and other core operations.

The Grand Atrium project was the most significant new development in the 150-year life of the museum since it moved from Princes Street to the Domain in 1929.

10 years ago — February 2009:

• Jennian Homes director Richard Carver said leaky homes were more than likely being built by cowboy builders who had been allowed to build houses again after their companies had failed, and by builders who were still taking shortcuts.

"What we have here are shonky builders reinventing themselves, rising yet again from the ashes as phoenix companies, or simply restarting after previous failures, because company rules have not been changed to prevent it," he said.

"Under current legislation and regulations, anyone can set up a building company — they don't require any capital or licensing, or any basic building or business skills. As a result, they have poor business practices and non-existent quality systems," Mr Carver said

5 years ago — February 2014:

• A key research project was launched to help improve the resilience of the types of homes that performed poorly in the Christchurch earthquakes.

Engineering experts from BRANZ, with research support from the Earthquake Commision (EQC), were to use computer modelling to assess the impact of simulated seismic action on modern homes with more complex configurations.

The research was prompted by findings that less complex homes in Christchurch performed better in the quakes than those built beyond the limits of NZ Standard 3604.

BRANZ and EQC said findings from the research were to be used to develop new guidelines for houses built outside the scope of NZS 3604 in order to mitigate potential damage in earthquake events.

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An opportunity for New Zealand trades that 'cannot be squandered'

The New Zealand Qualifications Framework is under review, and Building and Construction Industry Training Organisation (BCITO) chief executive Warwick Quinn says this is an opportunity to position trade and vocational-based qualifications more fairly that cannot be squandered.

BCITO chief executive Warwick Quinn

"There is a level of inter-generational prejudice in New Zealand against pursuing construction careers. School leavers are commonly encouraged to pursue degrees, with trades-based pathways seen as an inferior second choice," Mr Quinn says.

"Given the flow-on effect of this on the supply of skilled employees and the importance of trades occupations and related industries to the New Zealand economy, this status issue is a significant concern."

He says much of this prejudice is cultural and is, therefore, difficult to shift. However, the Government can assist by explicitly signalling that it sees all pathways as valid, and providing equitable support for all career paths.

"There is scope for considering the implicit signals sent by Government policy settings. For example, in the current New Zealand Qualifications Framework, a basic trade qualification sits at Level 4 and advanced trade qualifications at level 5 and 6, while a Bachelor's degree sits at Level 7.

"In other words, entry-level academic qualifications are given greater status than highly advanced technical education. This is despite both qualifications being similar in complexity and length.

"This sends the wrong signal that a vocational career is inferior to an academic-based one."

Mr Quinn suggests looking at overseas examples such as the frameworks used in Scotland and the rest of the United Kingdom which have more balance between vocational and academic qualifications.

"This means vocational training receives greater recognition in those countries, increasing the prestige associated with a career in the trades."

Mr Quinn says the current Framework simply lists the qualification types and provides little information to students, parents and employers (see Figure 1).

"We propose revising the Framework to emphasise qualification outcomes rather than qualification names. This would involve adding a Qualification Pathways column, and giving examples of the qualification type at academic and vocational levels (see Figure 2).

"We believe this would help students in connecting qualifications with their goals, and deciding, for example, whether a Level 2, Level 4, or Level 6 qualification is most suitable for them," Mr Quinn says.

Level	Certificate	Diploma	Degree
10			Doctoral Degree
9			Master's Degree
8	Postgraduate Certificate	Postgraduate Diploma	Bachelor Honours Degree
7	Graduate Certificate	Graduate Diploma; Diploma	Bachelor's Degree
6	Certificate	Diploma	
5	Certificate	Diploma	
4	Certificate		
3	Certificate		
2	Certificate		
1	Certificate		

Source: Adapted from New Zealand Qualifications Authority (n.d.)

Above: Figure 1: Current New Zealand Qualifications Framework structure.

Below: Figure 2: A proposed outcome-inclusive Qualification Framework structure.

Level	Qualification Pathway	'Academic' Examples	'Vocational' Examples
10	Advanced Professional and Research Education	Doctoral Degrees	
9		Masters' Degrees	
8		Postgraduate Diplomas & Certificates; Honours Degrees	Post-experience education; advanced technical specialisations
7	Professional and Vocational Education	300-level Degree papers & Bachelors' Degrees; Graduate Diploma/ Certificate	Degree apprenticeships; New Zealand Apprenticeships; advanced vocational training
6		200-level Degree papers; Pre-degree Diplomas	New Zealand Apprenticeships
5	Core and Occupational Training	100-level Degree papers; Pre-degree Certificates	Specialised vocational training (e.g. team management; basic specialisation)
4		Bridging qualifications	Non-apprenticeship vocational training
3		Bridging qualifications, including NCEA L3	Initial vocational training; Bridging qualifications, including pre-trade qualifications and NCEA L3
2	Foundation Learning	Foundation qualifications, including NCEA L1 and L2	

Green not Green

Architect Don Bunting digs behind current environmental issues.

I recently attempted to reduce the amount of old information on my library shelves. As someone once said: your library should be an art gallery and not a museum.

During this process I discovered a folder containing the New Zealand Institute of Architects' (NZIA) Environmental Policy of 1992. This was a series of articles on sustainable issues of the time.

I recall that there was an accompanying chart listing a range of common building materials, their pathway through the manufacturing/supply process, and their embodied energy rating. However, this seems to have been lost.

I also found that this information is no longer held on the NZIA web site. The only survivor of this once red-hot topic was a short Practice Note titled *Environmentally sustainable design in residential buildings*.

I wonder if today there is too much emphasis, at least in the public mind, of climate change, and what to do about it in the broadbrush sense, and far less consideration of what can be done about it on a practical level — ie, is there too much emphasis on the dire result rather than practical solutions?

Alongside the NZIA Environmental policy papers on my shelves was a real relic — the Values Party manifesto of 1975.

For those who don't remember, the Values Party was the precursor to the current Green Party.

Their manifesto contained a number of gems, such as a conscious commitment to stabilising the population level. This, as a major plank of their environmental policy, was one of the more outlandish.

They also believed that "there is nothing wrong with man altering the environment, but it must be done carefully". Those were simpler times.

Going green

I remember with some personal pain the attempt to create an online resource of useful data on sustainable construction products under the name Greenbuild.

Like all small businesses, it was always vulnerable to failure. However, what is more critical to survival is timing. If you are too far ahead of where society or technology is currently tracking then your chances of success are greatly reduced.

And in 2007, sustainable building products was a concept more honoured in the breach than in the observance.

Beacon Pathway (www.beaconpathway.co.nz) is one of the few shining lights in attempts to put sustainability at the forefront of construction industry thinking.

However, it is not clear whether they are seen by designers and contractors as a useful design resource, or how well they are able to influence government thinking. Nevertheless, they deserve your support.

The big question

The New Zealand construction industry is still unfortunately based on a "cheapest is best" mentality.

As recent history has shown, contractors are also being tied into fixed price contracts and are left scrabbling to save cash wherever they can.

Another over-arching factor is the use by most designers of minimum standard acceptable solutions.

This is often done to avoid an exhausting battle during the consent process rather than believing that minimum standards are necessarily right for their particular project.

Our building consent process has a lot to answer for in terms of the industry taking an automaton approach to design.

And if the anecdotal stories of egregiously low fee levels for designers are true, then who can blame them? The environmental baby is being discarded, along with the low-cost mentality bathwater. How sad is that?

A different viewpoint on concrete

Concrete as a building material has a less than stellar environmental reputation, mainly due to a focus on the high levels of carbon dioxide generated during cement production, with the cement industry emitting as much greenhouse gas as aviation.

It is also seen as not renewable, and relatively inflexible to amend or demolish a building at the end of its life.

However, crushed concrete is increasingly being used as a source of aggregate for non-structural new construction.

For a building product in use for at least 12,000 years, it is often unfairly viewed as a lesser alternative to steel or timber.

Tim Harford, author of *Fifty things that made the modern economy*, talks about a social programme called Piso Firme (Firm Floor) in the Coahuila state of Mexico.

The Mexican Government allowed poor families to apply for $150 worth of ready mix concrete.

Workers would then drive concrete mixers through poor neighbourhoods, stopping outside the homes of needy families and pour out concrete onto the living room dirt floor.

Economists found that the advantages arising from this simple programme were immense, including improved children's education, less disease and happier families.

Be very afraid

A recent TV news programme showed Auckland Mayor Phil Goff standing at the base of one of the City Rail Link excavations in Auckland's Albert Street.

He said during the interview, "we are operating in a cost-sensitive environment". This is politician's code for "we are expecting a significant budget overrun".

Auckland and national tax payers should be very afraid. My 2017 view that the much-vaunted City Rail Link was more likely to exceed $6 billion than the estimated $3 billion is, unfortunately, looking more and more likely.

When did estimates on construction projects become just a rough guess rather than a considered attempt to establish a maximum future cost?

Sadly, politicians prefer minimum estimates for their favourite projects as it makes it much more likely they will be approved. Light rail schemes, look out!

High Court considers council negligence for fallen tree in Queenstown

Timothy Bates and Sabina Boyd of Auckland law firm Legal Vision review a case that determined whether the Queenstown Lakes District Council had breached their care of duty after a tree fell onto a neighbouring hotel property.

In the High Court decision of Plaza Investments Ltd ("Plaza") v Queenstown Lakes District Council ("the council"), the court was asked to determine whether the Queenstown Lakes District Council had breached their duty of care by allowing a tree to fall onto a neighbouring hotel property.

Facts

Plaza owns a lakeside motel in Queenstown, with Queenstown's St Omer Park (containing an "over-mature" poplar tree), across the road.

During high winds, the 120-year-old tree fell into Plaza's property, causing extensive damage. The cost to repair the damage was $63,577.72.

After inspection of the tree, it was discovered that it was infected with white rot, which had caused it to fall. The council had previously experienced poplar tress falling because of rot, and had arranged for a number of inspections and expert reports to be undertaken to avoid further damage.

The majority of the reports recommended regular testing for further decay of all poplar trees, and to put in place a tree felling plan to remove and replace the trees.

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District Court judgment

The District Court held that the council owed a duty of care to behave to the standard of a reasonable local authority, with the information available to them.

It held that the council did not have a duty to undertake internal testing, based on what a reasonable authority would have done in the circumstances, and that it was reasonable of the council to rely solely on visual inspections. The District Court found that the council was not negligent.

Appeal

The issues for the High Court to consider included whether the District Court erred in:

- Restricting the scope of the duty of care owed by the council,
- Determining there was insufficient evidence to find the council had breached the duty of care owed, and
- Determining that even if the council did breach its duty of care, there was no causal link between the breach and the damage caused to Plaza's property.

Did the Judge err in defining the scope of the duty of care owed by the council?

The High Court found that the council had a duty of care not only to inspect and maintain the trees, but also to prevent or minimise the known hazards of the park.

The majority of the inspections and reports focused on regular monitoring and detection to prevent further decay, not just inspection and maintenance.

The High Court also found that rather than comparing the standard of care to a reasonable authority in the council's position, it should have been compared to a reasonable authority who were aware of the risks of the hazards of the tree.

It ruled the District Court wrongly construed the duty of care.

Was there sufficient evidence to find the council had breached the duty of care owed?

The High Court considered that the council's knowledge and foreseeability of the harm should be assessed at the time when the tree fell, being in 2014.

Several recommendations were made by various tree-testing companies to continually maintain and inspect the trees, which the council failed to do.

Although the council had knowledge that all poplar trees posed a risk, they did not take any steps to mitigate those risks, apart from visual inspections, which did not suffice.

Was there a causal link between the council's breach of duty and the damage caused to Plaza's property?

The High Court considered that the council's omission to minimise risk or harm caused the damage to Plaza's property. In knowing that the trees were of poor health, there was a foreseeable risk they would fall and cause damage.

It was not necessary to prove that the council would reasonably foresee that that particular tree would fall onto Plaza's property.

It concluded that it was more likely than not, that if the council had conducted regular testing, like it was advised to, decay would have been discovered in the tree, and the tree could therefore be removed.

The High Court therefore overruled the District Court's judgment. The council was found to be negligent, and was ordered to meet the cost of repairs.

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 or *Building Today* to anyone who relies on the information contained in this article.

A new year — but is it a new dawn?

Terry Sage of Trades Coaching New Zealand says 2019 could be a new dawn for some, while for others it'll be a case of same old, same old.

"A new year, a new dawn" — I bet it's some poetic line from a song that made some guy rich.

For some people returning to work, it has a ring of truth about it. For others the return is more like "here we go again", and they seem content with continuing on with the same old same old.

Then there are the few that absolutely dread the first day back and have tendencies to reach for a gun — and I don't mean a Paslode.

So which one were you? And does it actually matter?

Yes, it does matter, and it matters a lot for all those reasons you read in the deep meaningful books, including your well-being, your future, your wealth, happiness, health and family — and the list goes on.

So, what's my point? The point is, because it does matter, why do so many of us put up with the "here we go again" syndrome, or the "I can't face another day" head space — or even the "I'm going to change but never do" situation.

There are people out there that are totally happy with their life and place within it (yeah, right!). But being mere humans, we have the tendency to always want more, or feel that there is greener grass just over there.

And why not? Time is short, we deserve the best, and we work very hard for it. So who's going to give us the best? Who's going to make those changes for us? Who's going to wave the magic wand?

Unfortunately, there is only one Harry Potter in this world and, sorry to burst your bubble, but he's a phony.

So that leaves just you. "Arrrgghh!" you shout as you plummet into the depths of despair.

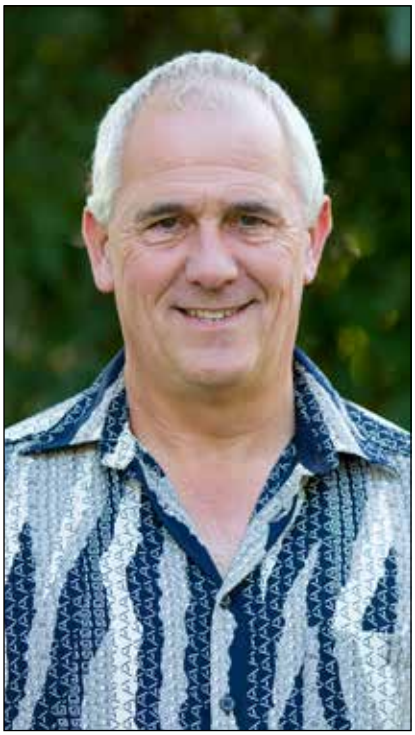
It's not all bad, really. But change can only come from within (another line from those many books collecting dust on the shelf). And it's so true.

Everything is possible if you want it, are determined for it, and have the right attitude for it — they are the three clinchers that make change possible.

Now, having said it's up to you, you're not on your own. Yes, it has to come from within, but you don't have to sail solo all the way.

Yes, it has to start with you, yes you need the three clinchers, and yes you need the dream and the goal to reach.

But surround yourself with the vehicles that will make the journey easier. Not an Aston Martin DB9 (mind you, who would care about work if one of those was sitting in the garage), but a forward thinking accountant (normally the younger kind), a lawyer who will listen (I promise, there are some), a bank manager with vision (okay, life's getting hard now), a team that has the same goals as you — and here's the sales line — a business coach that will be beside you and behind you all the way, giving you the inspiration and motivation to succeed. Yeah I know, you knew it was coming.



Seriously, don't settle for the same old same old this year. Go for those dreams you had when you were sipping the cocktails over the holidays, because you deserve them.

If work, change, dreams and all the rest become a little bewildering, and you are looking for something completely new with massive job satisfaction, four-day weeks, great earning potential, and to give back to your industry, then become a business coach with Trades Coaching New Zealand.

This is the year we plan to spread nationally, and we have opportunities for potential coaches. Call for a chat on 021 280 8679.

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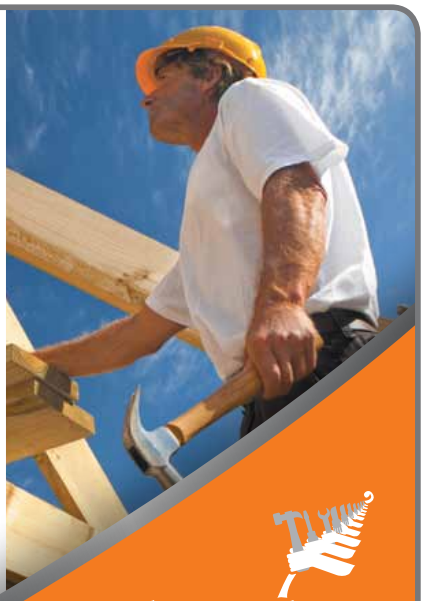

Trades Coaching New Zealand
THE BUSINESS SIDE OF CONSTRUCTION

Too damn nice

Tradie HR director Leigh Olsen discusses situations where business owners have been taken advatage of — and even bullied!

As a business owner, have there been times where you feel your good nature has been taken advantage of? You pay well, provide benefits and a good working environment, but still your workers complain?

Do any of your workers speak to you in ways that you would never speak to anyone?

At Tradie HR we are seeing a number of cases where owners and managers are being held seemingly to ransom by their workers. Held to ransom by unacceptable behaviour — workers openly disregarding the rules to show others that they can get away with anything. And held to ransom by unreasonable demands.

A recent example of this was an employee demanded right before Christmas that his boss give him a pay increase, or else he was leaving immediately.

The owner had no issue with him requesting a conversation around pay at all, but it was the way that his employee went about it.

He was rude, threatening and intimidating, in emails and in person.

The owner called me, confused and upset by what had just happened. He was almost ready to give in and give him a pay rise in order to keep the peace. But that would have sent the wrong message to his employee and the rest of the team.

We worked through a plan together, he met with his employee and had a really good conversation. My client explained the business reason for why he was unable to review his employee's hourly rate at this time, but that he would, as part of a company-wide strategy, be reviewing everyone's pay in the new year.

Also as part of this meeting, my client listened to his employee's reasons and, because he had prepared for this meeting, was able to respond logically and rationally in a calm and professional way, even when the employee got emotional at times.

Was the employee happy? Not entirely, but he was grateful for the discussion, and was able to understand where his boss was coming from.

More important, my client set a good example to his employee about how to approach things in the future.

What should you do when you think you are being taken for a ride?

Imagine this scenario. You have an employee called "Tom" who texts you that he is not going to be in at work as he is not well.

Of course, this is not a problem, but then Tom starts turning up late for work on a more regular basis. You let it go for a while as Tom is a good worker.

There are more texts and more excuses for non-attendance — trips to hospitals, mechanical issues with the car, issues with the phone, multiple bereavements, life-threatening conditions and so on.

Then you look back at the number of days Tom has been at work and realise he has been absent more than he has been at work — and you have no medical certificates or proof for any of the reasons he gave you.

Sadly this is not an isolated case. I have come across many similar incidents where workers have developed a pattern of what we call Monday-itis. This is not just limited to a Monday, as we see it on a Friday as well!

It's easy to spot when you look back over the attendance register. Often a conversation where you show the employee the pattern and seek to understand why they are doing this, can often be enough to bring about a change in behaviour.

However, the longer you leave the absence unaddressed, the harder the problem will be to deal with.

Breaking the rules

Another client had a couple of employees blatantly disregarding his company rules. When I asked him why, he said he was scared of them.

This was very concerning, as no one should feel scared of anyone at work, regardless of their position or ranking in the company.

These two employees were boldly showing off and using intimidating tactics such as threatening to leave (a common one) — and always said in front of other people.

They were being excessively vocal in staff meetings, as every time the manager would speak, they would throw up obstacles and just challenge for the sake of a challenge.

They were also excessively speeding in company vehicles and laughing about it afterwards, even when members of the public called to complain!

Unfortunately, by allowing these behaviours to continue, my client was, in fact, condoning the behaviour, and others in the team were seeing it happen.

We addressed it not by usual disciplinary means, but by trying to understand the reasons for the employee's behaviour in the first place.

We provided one-on-one coaching for the manager and employees where they established clear guidelines around their responsibilities, and how they were going to demonstrate the right behaviours on a day-to-day basis.

Help at hand

The culture of a business is "the way we do things around here", and the behaviour of every person in your business contributes to your culture.

If things have got a bit out of hand then please don't hesitate to contact me in confidence so we can work with you to get things back on track for you, your workforce and your business.

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HR Essentials
People Strategy
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Building Consents Information

For All Authorisations, October 2018

Dwellings	$981,108,000
Domestic Outbuildings	$13,941,000
Total Residential	$995,050,000
Non-residential	$524,590,000
Total All Buildings	$1,519,640,000
Non-building Construction	$38,125,000
Total Authorisations	$1,557,764,000

Number of new dwellings consented

	Dec 2018	Nov 2018	Dec 2017		Dec 2018	Nov 2018	Dec 2017
Far North District	17	55	30	Horowhenua District	22	20	13
Whangarei District	44	56	35	Kapiti Coast District	17	32	20
Kaipara District	20	18	18	Porirua City	15	30	44
Rodney District	59	68	58	Upper Hutt City	21	23	28
North Shore/AlbanyWards	179	272	258	Lower Hutt City	25	67	14
Waitakere Ward	55	125	35	Wellington City	47	103	12
Auckland Wards	390	326	126	Masterton District	11	17	18
Manukau/Howick Wards	114	213	267	Carterton District	7	7	7
Manurewa-Papakura Ward	83	115	94	South Wairarapa District	14	13	10
Franklin Ward	58	53	38	Tasman District	40	18	35
Thames-Coromandel District	15	47	35	Nelson City	5	29	13
Hauraki District	8	10	11	Marlborough District	18	18	28
Waikato District	52	69	30	Kaikoura District	5	6	4
Matamata-Piako District	11	19	7	Buller District	5	3	1
Hamilton City	101	174	57	Grey District	3	2	2
Waipa District	42	50	34	Westland District	4	4	3
Otorohanga District	3	5	1	Hurunui District	16	10	15
South Waikato District	3	11	1	Waimakariri District	55	62	50
Waitomo District	2	1	4	Christchurch City	212	208	137
Taupo District	18	22	23	Selwyn District	92	98	55
Western Bay of Plenty District	20	24	43	Ashburton District	5	28	14
Tauranga City	81	108	57	Timaru District	6	27	12
Rotorua District	21	13	18	Mackenzie District	7	7	6
Whakatane District	4	6	6	Waimate District	0	1	1
Kawerau District	1	1	1	Chatham Islands Territory	0	1	0
Opotiki District	3	1	2	Waitaki District	6	10	11
Gisborne District	6	7	5	Central Otago District	23	37	20
Wairoa District	0	0	2	Queenstown-Lakes District	73	88	111
Hastings District	19	39	18	Dunedin City	32	50	30
Napier City	5	18	12	Clutha District	5	3	1
Central Hawke's Bay District	3	4	3	Southland District	5	5	18
New Plymouth District	40	36	30	Gore District	4	2	4
Stratford District	2	1	2	Invercargill City	7	27	11
South Taranaki District	3	6	5	Area Outside TA	0	0	0
Ruapehu District	7	8	4				
Whanganui District	5	15	12	Total	2382	3120	2169
Rangitikei District	1	2	2	• Based on 2006 census areas			
Manawatu District	46	20	12	• Each dwelling unit in a housing project is counted separately			
Palmerston North City	32	45	25	• Figures in these tables may differ from published statistics			
Tararua District	2	1	0				

Source: Statistics New Zealand

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Congratulations go to Hugh Lintott of Feilding, who correctly answered that Shaun Johnson will play for the Cronulla Sharks in this season's NRL, and Kiel Smith of Waiuku, who correctly answered that Saxton Oval is the venue used for cricket internationals in Nelson. They both win double passes for a Go Karting session at Hampton Downs or Highlands, Cromwell.

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