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THE OFFICIAL MAGAZINE OF THE REGISTERED MASTER BUILDERS FEDERATION



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As 2011 draws to a close there's not a lot of good news on the horizon regarding prospective building consent numbers for 2012.

RMBF chief executive Warwick Quinn warns that the industry is looking as though it will limp into 2012 on the back of very low activity.

He says it's clear there is work looming but that continued seismic activity in Canterbury means uncertainty remains as to when a lot of that work will commence.

*Building Today's* latest web site poll asked readers whether they thought the Christchurch CBD should be rebuilt to the west of the current city boundaries where it is thought it would be safer to construct new buildings, with 81% voting in favour of the idea.

Two thousand of the country's now 10,000 Licensed Building Practitioners have been registered in Canterbury. Getting these builders back to work would obviously provide a huge shot in the arm for the industry.

**Andrew Darlington**  
Editor



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# chief's chat

by ceo warwick quinn

## 2012 — prepare for more of the same

I've recently been talking to various suppliers and construction sector groups about what new building consent numbers will be for 2012.

Budgets are being prepared for the next year and we are all crystal ball gazing about what will happen. Virtually everyone was wrong this year by being overly optimistic, so it is no real surprise that we're a bit coy going forward.

The sector issued about 14,500 new dwelling consents in 2009 and 15,500 in 2010. It is looking like we will end up around 12,000-ish for this year, a drop of more than 20%.

Latest consent figures are up and down like a yoyo, so it appears we are currently running along the bottom of a trough, and it is anyone's guess when we might experience something of a steady recovery.

September figures were 17% down on August which were 17% up on July — and June was the first increase for many months. Lack of activity around the general election and Rugby World Cup will most probably reveal continuing low numbers (I hope I am wrong), so it is looking as if we will limp into 2012 on the back of very low activity.

That does not bode well for a kick start in the new year, and if jobs are not secured now then it will be a very tough start for many in 2012, particularly when you are having to fund the holiday overheads and tax



payments immediately after Christmas on the back of traditionally low December and January activity.

It is not uncommon for companies to really struggle over this period, so our advice is to prepare for it as survival is paramount.

### Work looming

It is clear there is work looming, and we have spoken previously about the Canterbury rebuild, the Auckland housing shortage (thought to be around 10,000 dwellings), and the financial assistance package for the repair of leaky buildings.

Add to that the recently released Auckland City Draft Spatial Plan, which has identified that Auckland City will require some 400,000 dwelling units over the next 30 years to accommodate its growth.

That's more than 13,000 per annum, and the region is currently building about 3500 — so, potentially, there is lots of work.

It may also be a different type of work, with greater density housing in the form of apartments and the like which, in turn, may see larger companies engaging smaller companies to undertake such big projects — time will tell.

However, overlaying all this is the uncertainty relating to the seismic activity in Canterbury, and whether continued shakes will further delay the rebuilding work — along with the very volatile outlook for the global economy and its affect on New Zealand performance.

When people pick up the newspaper and listen to the news on the radio or TV it is no wonder they are reticent about committing to that new home or major renovation.

Their personal prospects are viewed with equal uncertainty — will they be made redundant? Will wage rises be low? The whole world could turn pear shaped and New Zealand will follow — what will that mean for me?

Well, what it means for construction is no work and further tough times ahead — except maybe for Canterbury and perhaps Auckland (leaky building repairs and housing shortages). The rest of the country may continue to struggle.

But, getting back to 2012 and what will happen. Well, let's surmise that Canterbury starts in the first quarter of next year (assuming no further earthquake concerns), the Auckland market pressures start to have an impact but the rest of the country is still slow but slowly improving.

If that is the case then by the end of the year we may be experiencing consent numbers at around 18,000 per annum (on a monthly basis), but with a slow start to the year (at current levels of 12,000 per annum) it may give us an average for the calendar year of around 15,000.

### Concentrated growth

But this growth is mostly concentrated in two regions as this is predominantly not a response to improving global economic prospects, but unique local issues instead.

However, all predictions are wrong, because they are predictions, and it is anyone's guess. My only counsel is to prepare for a continuation of the current situation for a while yet, but hope for a better outcome by way of a pick-up sooner.

The regions will continue to be tight, and you will need to be ever diligent in your costings and overheads — and market, market, market your wares, chase every job and be prepared to put in a lot of effort chasing work as it will not just come to you.

# Our apprentices — stepping up for the future!

By RMBF president

Blair Cranston

I am writing this immediately after attending the national final of our Apprentice of the Year competition in Wellington.

It was a fabulous end to the 2011 event, held at a lovely venue on the waterfront. Our thanks again go out to our principal sponsor Carters and our partner BCITO and supporting sponsor the Department of Building and Housing.

Our 10 regional winners who made up the national finalists were put through their paces on the Friday and Saturday under the critical eye of our national judges, were taken to dinner on the Friday night and then attended the awards evening on the Saturday night.

Each of the 10 finalists are fine young people, full of excitement and enthusiasm towards the construction industry and their chosen career path. The competition was tough and, in my opinion, they were all winners on the night, having made it through their respective regional competitions to get to the final.

Of course, only the top three places could be awarded, so the evening culminated in the awards and prize packages being presented. The packages included tools, education packages, a course at Outward Bound and more.

A highlight for all 10 finalists was an invitation for each of them to attend our national House of the Year event in Auckland in November. As I left the function, it was clear to me that the apprentices and their support people were in for a very long night!

On my return flight to Auckland the next day, the



events of the night before encouraged me to reflect on my involvement with the RMBF and, in particular, my time as national president, which will end at our next conference. How time flies!

My role has been a busy one, especially when combining the demands with the running of my own business in what have generally been tough economic times.

However, it is just so rewarding. The opportunities presented are unique and the benefits are immeasurable. The friendships, the invitations, the travel, the venues, the events, the networking, the education and the personal development — the list goes on. I would not trade my time with the RMBF for anything.

Our leaders, our management, our staff and our members are all passionate about what we do and

generous with the time needed to do it.

It is easy to become a little battle weary as we spend years working in an industry with huge challenges and escalating complexities. Meeting young, excited and energetic young people at our Apprentice of the Year events has reminded me of the reasons why we have all ended up in this industry.

We all want to have a career path, earn a good living and make a difference, while having some fun along the way.

We now owe it to our future generations of members to provide them with a sound career path and to cultivate an industry working environment that rewards our involvement.

The RMBF has been well led and managed for many years. Capable people seem to get involved at the right time, sometimes by chance, more often by planning.

As I have attended numerous regional AGMs around the country, I have noted hesitancy and, at times, reluctance from members to put their hands up and take on a committee or presidency role with their local association.

Often, it appears that people underrate themselves or think they are too busy to give their time. I strongly urge those of you who can become the future leaders of this organisation to get on and put your names forward in future.

From personal experience, I can honestly say that you will get more out of it than you put in to it.

I am quite confident that we will see a number of the national final apprentices putting themselves forward for these roles within our organisation one day. And when they do, I am confident that the RMBF will be in good hands!

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# Christchurch builder racks up an impressive run of awards

Christchurch builder John Creighton has had an impressive run in the Registered Master Builders PlaceMakers House of the Year, having scooped a number of awards over the years of the competition.

John Creighton Builders Ltd was most recently given the Southern Region New Homes \$1million - \$2million award and, subsequently, a Gold Reserve Award for a stunning property overlooking Lake Wanaka and Mount Aspiring.

The company is now on its way to the national final for the third year in a row.

The house has been built for the Auckland client as a holiday home, with the vision of it becoming a destination for their retirement, and boasts features such as an open plan kitchen, dining and living rooms "designed to create maximum social interaction".

Last year, Mr Creighton's company scored itself the national PlaceMakers Renovation over \$500,000 award for a home in Christchurch.

The home has been described as an entertainer's dream, with every inch of the site utilised for function and style.

This home was changed completely, particularly with regards to the outdoor living area which started out as just a small deck.

"We excavated back into the hillside and built fantastic outdoor living areas. On the other side of the house we cleared bank and bush, and put in a pool, a pool house and more living area. It's the complete package," Mr Creighton says.

"We also extended the house, putting on another large lounge area and another bedroom and ensuite," he says.

Judges said the renovations and additions to the indoor and outdoor living spaces seamlessly integrate into the original home.

"While keeping with the original home, clever restoration of original features and the addition of new matching materials delivered a seamless integration. You simply can't see where the old ends and new begins," they said.

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



*This John Creighton Builder Ltd entry won the 2011 Southern Region New Homes \$1million - \$2million category award for a property in Wanaka.*

Judges said the renovation shows superb craftsmanship from a building company at the height of its profession.

The fact that the house is superbly built and reinforced, combined with luck, meant the home sustained no damage after the recent spate of serious earthquakes in Christchurch.

"The clients were away at the time of the big quake, but they had a look around the place when they got back and couldn't believe it," Mr Creighton says.

The strengthening of this home perched on Scarborough Hill was significant.

"I remember at the time the client saying, 'God, is all that stuff really necessary?' because we were drilling into the rock and things. But he rang me up and said, 'I can see why you did all of that now,'" he says.

Mr Creighton says the recognition of his company due to the competition is a definite business advantage.

"Clients have confidence in us when they can see our awards. When they see a list of results, they know you're a capable builder.

"We've been at the national final a lot of times, so it's about being consistent with the work you produce," Mr Creighton says.

John Creighton Builders Ltd joined Registered Master Builders in 1993, a year after the company's inception. Mr Creighton says letting clients know that you're part of a reputable organisation is important.

"If they had any issues, the client has some sort of backing with the Registered Master Builders," Mr Creighton says.

John Creighton Builder Ltd's Wanaka property will now be re-judged before the National Category winners and Supreme Award winners are announced at a gala dinner in Auckland on Saturday, November 19.

The Awards are made possible through the support of principal sponsor PlaceMakers and supporting sponsors James Hardie, Gib Living®, Pink® Batts® Ultra® (Tasman Insulation), Nulook, and the Department of Building and Housing.

For information about the competition, visit the Registered Master Builders web site at [www.masterbuilder.org.nz](http://www.masterbuilder.org.nz).

# Sustainability 'the future of building'

**W**airarapa construction company DR Borman Ltd has earned a good reputation over the years for building quality homes, and being awarded a Platinum Award reinforces that.

The Platinum Award, presented to the company at the gala dinner for the 2010 Registered Master Builders PlaceMakers House of the Year, signifies outstanding success, having achieved five National Awards over the course of the competition.

Owner and director John Hymers was in awe when DR Borman Ltd was awarded Platinum.

"The awards build up slowly over a period of time, so you don't realise your achievements until someone points it out," Mr Hymers says.

"Each award is always very special and you always remember them, but you don't collect them up in your own mind. Then you think back and remember, 'Oh yeah, we did win those'. It's great," Mr Hymers says.

Mr Hymers is most proud of the home which won the 2009 Meridian Sustainable Homes \$500,000 - \$1million category for a sustainable home in Mount Holdsworth, Carterton. The home also picked up the Pink® Batts® Ultra® Energy Efficiency Award.

The sustainability aspect of the home is what Mr Hymers believes makes it such a special home.

"It's really the direction I want to push the company. I believe sustainability is the future of building," he says.

"People are a lot more conscious of not being so wasteful and being conservative with the environment. Sustainability will have a strong impact when people come to sell their homes.

"People are getting a little bit sick of the throwaway society, and are becoming more sympathetic to the way they leave their footprint on the landscape."

The home in Mt Holdsworth is completely self-reliant. The selection of material and the way waste is dealt to was carefully considered.

Mr Hymers says DR Borman Ltd has just finished another sustainable home in Western Lake.



*The DR Borman Ltd entry that won the 2009 Meridian Sustainable Homes \$500,000 - \$1million category.*

"It's an earth-covered house. Earth is used as the insulation across the top of the roof and around the two back sides of the home, so there's only one side that faces into the open and the rest is covered."

"It's the first earth house we've done, built on a very steep site with difficult access. But it's really interesting," he says.

"The house has its own hydro system and solar panels, and it has all macrocarpa finishing and concrete floors."

Being a part of Registered Master Builders has paid off for DR Borman Ltd, having achieved so much in the competition. Mr Hymers says he joined for the reputation of the organisation.

"Registered Master Builders is a group of builders that are recognised as being better than just the average builder," Mr Hymers says.

Entering the competition is something he recommends too.

"It's definitely worth it. But you've got to make the decision early and make sure you take care and pay attention to detail. The home has got to encompass design and the site, and the finishing details are really important."



The 2011 national gala dinner will take place in Auckland on Saturday, November 19.

The Awards are made possible through the support of principal sponsor PlaceMakers and supporting sponsors James Hardie, Gib Living®, Pink® Batts® Ultra® (Tasman Insulation), Nulook, and the Department of Building and Housing.

For information about the competition, visit the Registered Master Builders web site [www.masterbuilder.org.nz](http://www.masterbuilder.org.nz).

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# Bright future for construction as 2011 Apprentice of the Year named

New Zealand's construction industry can be certain that its future is in safe hands judging by the talent celebrated at an awards evening in Wellington on Saturday, October 29.

Dunedin apprentice Ryan Keogh, 22, was named the Registered Master Builders Carters 2011 Apprentice of the Year after competing alongside 10 national finalists from up and down New Zealand.

Second place was awarded to Matt Saathof, 21, of Hastings who is employed by Gemco Construction in Havelock North. Twenty-year-old Tom Storey, employed by Simon Linton Construction Ltd in Ohope, took out third place.

Winner Ryan Keogh said after winning the award that he was "absolutely overwhelmed".

"It's an absolute honour to be involved in this competition, and to be the winner, it blows my mind," he says.

Ryan is excited about the future and looking forward to furthering his study and his career.

"I'll complete my Diploma in Construction Management, and then I'd like to further myself on site. I've got half a dozen tradespeople under me at the moment. I want to grab the bull by the horns and make the most of the opportunities that are available," he says.

Ryan's employer, Ewan Oats at Naylor Love Construction Ltd in Dunedin, says he's been training apprentices for years, and having Ryan win the competition is a highlight.

"Ryan is an exceptional apprentice. He has a can-do attitude and he wants to achieve in all aspects of his work and education," Mr Oats says.

"We've offered him a scholarship and he's taken that on board, putting him through programmes at Otago Polytechnic.

"I'm quick to acknowledge Ryan's achievements, but every one of those other young men who have entered the competition deserves a word of accolade as well. I say good luck to all of them," he says.

The competition judges said Ryan, who is trained by the Building and Construction Industry Training Organisation, performed consistently across the competition.

"He's going to be an asset to the industry because he



From left: Carters chief executive Brent Waldron, BCITO chief executive Ruma Karaitiana, winner Ryan Keogh, DBH chief executive Katrina Bach, RMBF chief executive Warwick Quinn, RMBF president Blair Cranston, third placegetter Tom Storey (front left), and second placegetter Matt Saathof (front right).

is passionate about building and he has a desire to succeed," judges said.

"Ryan is strong in his health and safety knowledge, and his workmanship is very good. Ryan said he would rather take his time and get things right, and that showed through in his performance in the practical component," they said.

"We were looking for someone who excelled in all areas of building, and we found that in Ryan. We're very pleased to award him the top honours in this year's competition.

"All in all, these 10 guys are the best of the best. The Apprentice of the Year is a great competition to be involved in."

RMBF chief executive Warwick Quinn says training and retaining people in the construction industry is more important now than ever.

"Initiatives like the Apprentice of the Year are integral to showcasing our industry and providing a real and tangible career path in one of New Zealand's largest sectors," Mr Quinn says.

"The entrants in the Apprentice of the Year competition are exactly the type of bright young people New Zealand

needs, and it's important for the construction industry to encourage and support them."

The Apprentice of the Year competition is owned and managed by the Registered Master Builders Federation (RMBF), sponsored by Carters, partnered by the Building and Construction Industry Training Organisation, and supported by the Department of Building and Housing.

Apprentices, employers and those young people aspiring to be part of the construction industry are encouraged to join up to the Apprentice of the Year Facebook page:

[www.facebook.com/apprenticeoftheyear](http://www.facebook.com/apprenticeoftheyear).



MC comedian Te Radar and winning apprentice Ryan Keogh.

# Showcase building features 'damage avoidance' seismic engineering

Initial design proposal for the NMIT building was a nationwide government competition winner

**T**he showcase Nelson Marlborough Institute of Technology Arts & Media building scooped two major awards for commercial engineering and commercial architectural excellence in the NZ Wood Timber Design Awards announced recently.

The three-storey, seismically-protected timber structure was entirely built from locally grown and fabricated laminated veneer lumber.

Designed by Nelson-based architects Irving Smith Jack and engineering consultancy Aurecon, it was described by the judges as "a beautifully integrated design solution where the design process has fully embraced structural timber innovation to create a landmark building for New Zealand".

The initial design proposal for the NMIT building won a nationwide government competition for a groundbreaking timber structure to demonstrate and stimulate structural timber use.

The design includes world first "damage avoidance" seismic engineering incorporating post-tensioned timber shear walls.

The interior of Wellington Airport's new international terminal — "The Rock" — won the interior fit-out award, with the judges commenting on its "visually arresting interior" which resulted in "an iconic, engaging series of spaces".

The terminal was designed by Studio Pacific Architecture in association with Warren and Mahoney.

Other main award winners were:

- Sustainability: MOTAT Aviation Display Hall, by Studio Pacific Architecture and Holmes Consulting Group
- Residential Architectural Excellence: Little Oneroa House, Waiheke Island, by Cantilever Architects
- Cladding Building Envelope: Rotorua Island Exhibition Centre, Pearson & Associates Architects

The People's Choice award went to Kanuka Engineered Wood Products Ltd and Structural Concepts Ltd for Red Stag Timber's Reman building in Rotorua.



*The showcase Nelson Marlborough Institute of Technology Arts & Media building scooped two major awards for commercial engineering and commercial architectural excellence.*



*The Sustainability Award was won by Studio Pacific Architecture and Holmes Consulting Group for the MOTAT Aviation Display Hall in Auckland.*

# Safety management system should be simple and effective

An effective safety management system is not about lip service to the law. It is about empowering workers to keep themselves safe and injury free. *Jenny Baker* reports.

**S**afety consultant and Tauranga Registered Master Builders Association associate member Phil Sexton, of Complete Safety Management (CSM), recently introduced a new health and safety management system for the residential construction industry to local RMBF members.

Known as Q7 Site and Q7 Mobile, the product is aimed at residential main contractors and subcontractors. It complements CSM's third product, the Q7 Commercial pack for subcontractors in the commercial construction sector.

The system's resource pack consists of easy-to-use water-resistant signage, induction cards and information, and three simple registers contained in a weatherproof satchel.

Mr Sexton says CSM's comprehensive research indicated that, to be effective, a safety management system needs to fulfil certain criteria.

First, it must promote the desired behaviour to achieve the objective, namely a safe working culture and, consequently, efficient, profitable working.

"The real desired objective needs to be understood for any system to work. Other systems concentrate on avoiding prosecution as the objective. Q7 acknowledges and recognises workers as valuable, irreplaceable human beings," Mr Sexton says.

"It uses the absence of harm, and it focuses on ensuring the worker appreciates this regard for their safety," he says.

Second, it must be user-friendly. "If a system is too onerous to use, it won't be used. Similarly, if it is too easy and 'light' there will be little value apportioned to it and it won't be used. Q7 has the balance just right."

Third, it must be measurable and archiveable. "If a system is not measurable, the user has no way of knowing if it is being used or is actually working. Also, the user has no way of proving to someone else that the system has been used.

"In addition, without the facility to archive the record of use of the system, the historical record of your



*Safety consultant Phil Sexton*

efforts is lost."

Mr Sexton, a civil engineer, has been working in the health and safety industry for the past 11 years. CSM clients include big names in the construction and manufacturing industry, including the Bay of Plenty District Health Board Property Services, ESP Technologies, Generation Homes, Hallmark Homes, Highmark Homes, Jensen Steel Fabricators, Signature Homes and Triodent.

Recently, Fletchers endorsed the Q7 Commercial system as an approved plan for managing the health and safety aspects of earthquake recovery work in

Canterbury.

Mr Sexton says operating a safe workplace not only prevents accidents, but also enhances and benefits the operator's business — and is neither difficult nor expensive to achieve.

The consequences of not investing in health and safety can be devastating to workers and the company. In contrast, the best direct product of all the time and money invested in health and safety is "nothing" — no accidents, no injuries.

"My vision is to see the Q7 as being the benchmark for all health and safety systems in New Zealand, and that everyone who approaches a Q7 site — including Department of Labour inspectors — will think to themselves 'this is more than likely to be a safe site'."

Mr Sexton says the Government's Health and Safety Action Plan for the construction industry specifically identifies the need for robust health and safety systems to promote safer workplaces.

CSM believes that the Q7 systems fall in line with that requirement. "The Action Plan also identified a lack of leadership in health and safety as a contributory factor to the poor performance of the industry sector."

CSM is due to work with the Construction Safety Council on projects to progress the Government's Action Plan.

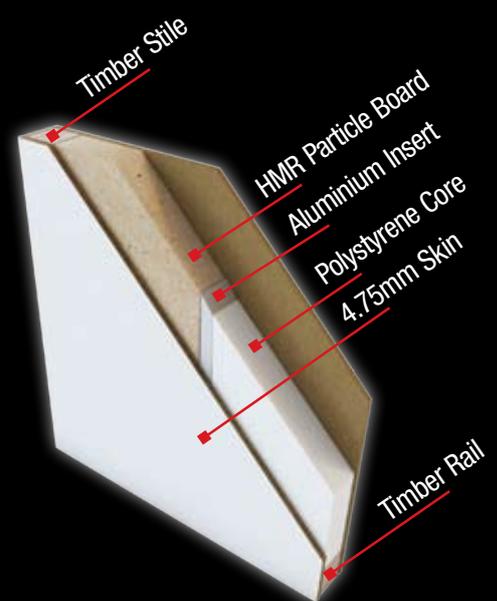


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news

## Christchurch Basilica

In an effort to save and restore the Christchurch Basilica after the devastating earthquakes that hit earlier this year, engineers have chosen a novel solution by using Royal Wolf shipping containers to support the cathedral's damaged walls whilst repairs are underway.

One hundred and three years after celebrating its first mass, the Renaissance-style Cathedral of the Blessed Sacrament, once the pride of the city, is now under critical repair, with the team working around the clock to save what they can and rebuild the rest to its former glory.

### Saving building very time sensitive

As part of a wider engineering strategy, saving the walls of the building was not only crucial, but very time sensitive as they supported other parts of the building.

Naylor Love Construction site manager Murray Flett says the work that needs to be done to the Basilica is extensive.

"Upon first seeing the challenge we recognised we needed a quick and effective solution to support the walls, as they were supporting other parts of the building such as the roof," Mr Flett says.

"Stacked shipping containers offered us an even spread of support, and hay bales between the containers and the cathedral walls made sure the support structure

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"One of the main considerations in deciding on this approach was the sturdiness of containers when stacked. The quantity that we needed to hire was large — 20 for the first order and then more than 30 for an additional wall. Royal Wolf was able to supply these at short notice and at a competitive price," he says.

Royal Wolf business development executive John Bowen says the company is delighted that it is able to assist in the effort to restore the Christchurch Basilica to its former glory, and provide a solution to Naylor Love Construction.

"With their portability, low cost and easily customised design, Royal Wolf containers offer many industries a variety of solutions," Mr Bowen says.

"During the Christchurch earthquake clean-up process our containers have been used for everything from temporary retail units for affected businesses, accommodation units for the New Zealand Fire Service, site offices and even protection barriers from potential landslides on main arterial routes."



Shipping containers have been used to support the badly damaged walls of the Christchurch Basilica whilst repairs are underway.

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## Tumu ITM building design a world first



**N**apier's new Tumu ITM store is the first commercial building in the world to use a revolutionary new timber jointing technology that simplifies the installation of long-span laminated veneer lumber (LVL) sections.

The major design feature of the building is a roof structure of LVL beams that span 60 metres, with the beams spliced together and fixed to columns using an innovative steel dowel and self-drilling screw system.

Known as the Xpan Quick Connect Joint, the system was developed specifically for the project by the Structural Timber Innovation Company (STIC) in conjunction with Auckland University.

STIC chief executive Robert Finch describes the system as a simple and quick way to join large structural members together while reducing the need for complex traditional steel plate joints that require thousands of nails.

According to Tumu ITM management partner Paul Waite there were two key reasons for choosing the building design.

"Our company is a major local force in the timber industry and we wanted to reflect that," Mr Waite says. "More importantly, the LVL design enabled us to meet the requirements of our customers by providing a much more user-friendly space.

"With LVL, we were able to get the spans we required to create a large, obstruction-free space to assist traffic flow through the store and eliminate congestion.

"The first day we opened, we had a steady stream of clients coming through and, at one stage, we had a large line-up of vehicles parked inside the store — and yet there was still plenty of room for other vehicles to drive through without being held up."

Located in Thames Street, Napier, the 4200 sq m Tumu ITM store building is the newest ITM store in the country.

Construction was completed on time for the scheduled opening on November 1 by local Hawkes Bay builders and Registered Master Builders Federation member Alexander Construction Ltd.

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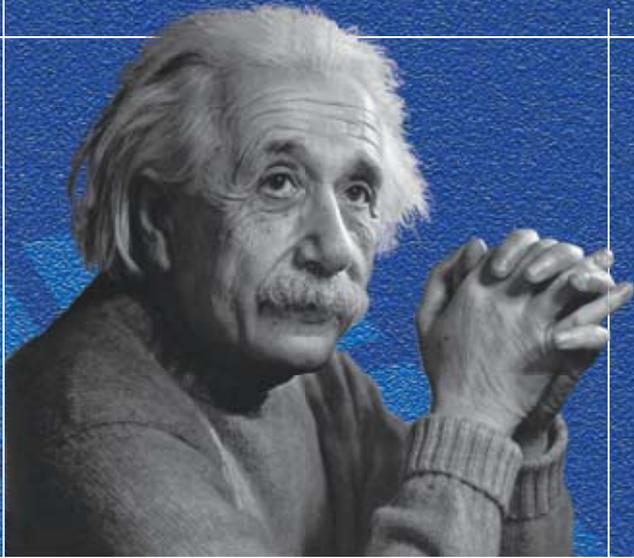
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news

## LBP numbers pass 10,000 mark

*Building Today* continues its series of articles looking at the Licensed Building Practitioners scheme which comes into effect fully in March 2012.

### This month: LBP milestone reached

**B**uilding and Construction Minister Maurice Williamson has congratulated the Department of Building and Housing on registering its 10,000th Licensed Building Practitioner (LBP).

The LBP scheme is a national building competency scheme that was launched in 2007 to raise standards across the construction sector, and to give consumers greater confidence in the quality of building work done.

The LBP scheme is part of a broad package of legislative reforms to the Building Act 2004 which Mr Williamson introduced into Parliament over the past 12 months.

"This is a significant milestone, and credit is due to the work of the Department of Building and Housing which is responsible for administering the Licensed Building Practitioner scheme," Mr Williamson says.

"The LBP scheme underpins an efficient and accountable building sector focused on quality. Licensing confirms a practitioner's level of expertise, and practitioner responsibility and accountability becomes clearer.

"It's a scheme which rewards diligent, hard working and trustworthy building practitioners, and it enhances consumer protection."

On October 25 the Minister attended a function at the Department to celebrate reaching the 10,000 milestone, and to congratulate Department chief executive Katrina Bach and her staff for the success of their hard work.

The core elements of the Government's reform package are contained in Building Amendment Bills No 3 and No 4. Bill No 3 has been reported back from the select committee and is expected to be passed into law early next year, while Bill No 4 was introduced into the House in September.

"Our goal is to have a more efficient and productive sector that stands behind its work," Mr Williamson says.

"The reforms we are driving are about creating fundamental changes to the building sector's culture to deliver a construction market that works smarter, has the skills and productivity to deliver good quality, affordable homes for New Zealanders, and contributes to strong communities and a prosperous economy for New Zealand.

"It's an ambitious work programme with the goal of a more efficient, effective, accountable and, ultimately, a more profitable sector where building practitioners get it right first time and are proud to stand behind the quality of their work.

"That is going to be critical for rebuilding Canterbury, where there are an estimated 10,000 homes needing to be rebuilt and a further 100,000 needing repairs.

"In this regard, I note that more than 2000 of the country's 10,000 LBPs are in Canterbury. I commend the Department of Building and Housing for its initiative in making it a priority to sign up Canterbury practitioners," Mr Williamson says.

# Christchurch, meet Prefab — Prefab, meet Christchurch

By Lifetime Design Ltd general manager Andrew Olsen

The months are passing by and still the people of Christchurch are waiting for some kind of green light in the rebuilding of their homes.

In-depth planning of design and city infrastructure is integral, but timing is also of the essence, with new housing needed as quickly as possible for the many thousands of people who've lost their homes.

One solution gaining great traction nationally and globally which could be considered for Christchurch is the use of prefabricated design solutions. Prefab is a way to create innovative, high-quality buildings on time and within budget.

Prefabrication can potentially offer more for less: more quality for less time on site, more tangible outcomes and less risk, and more energy efficiency for less resource use.

Historical and contemporary prefabricated housing examples suffer from widespread misconceptions, but technology, materials and design are taking the design and construction world by storm, and are proving a key approach to improve efficiency, effectiveness and productivity.

Prefab buildings are ideally placed to respond to the Canterbury rebuild as they can deliver built solutions on time, on budget and with a high quality design.

And particularly for Canterbury and the ongoing earthquake risk, prefab housing offers a quickly



deployable solution. It is reinforced with structural bracing to withstand transportation so it is very strong and can protect occupants from future earthquakes.

There are a number of RMBF members who have partnered with PrefabNZ, along with other developers and designers, to build the PrefabNZ Canterbury Housing Innovation Park.

The park is a selection of buildings which will showcase permanent materials and quality architectural design using prefab/offsite construction technologies.

The development of the park recognises the importance of quality architectural design that considers "whole-of-life" design using the Lifetime Design concept.

The Lifemark by Lifetime Design is an innovative design-led solution which incorporates common sense design principles that cater to people at every stage of life.

These principles include level entranceways, wider doors and hallways, accessible power points and lights, bathrooms with strengthened walls that can accommodate future handrails and a shower seat, and kitchens with enough space to move around easily.

The park will be a "living billboard" or a "store-front" of houses that can be sold off the plans. It is a great opportunity to show the people of Christchurch, New Zealand and even the world how a city can be rebuilt on time, on budget and designed to cater for the future.

It will open and be free to view from late February 2012. For more information go to [www.lifemark.co.nz](http://www.lifemark.co.nz).

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## products

## Designer spouting system launched

**M**arley is proud to introduce its new generation of designer uPVC spouting and downpipe systems. Marley spouting and downpipe systems have been protecting New Zealand homes from the elements for more than 40 years.

The Marley Stratus Design series is created with style and durability in mind. When renovating, replacing existing spouting or building a new home, the series offers a premium sophisticated look while protecting against New Zealand's unique UV rays and changeable climatic conditions. It is guaranteed to never rust, rot or corrode.

Marley has spent 10 years researching materials and perfecting the co-extrusion manufacturing process to deliver the new uPVC spouting and downpipe system, which is available in copper and titanium hybrid-metallic finishes.

The new series includes the popular Typhoon half round spouting with the choice of internal or external mounting brackets. The system also includes New Zealand's number one selling round downpipe, Marley RP80, and a full range of moulded components in matching titanium and copper colours.

These low-maintenance products are proudly manufactured in New Zealand, and are 100% recyclable. The system is also suitable for the collection of safe drinking water when used as part of the Marley Rainharvesting system.

For further information visit [www.marley.co.nz](http://www.marley.co.nz).

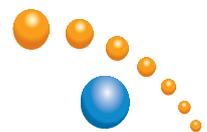
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# Corinthian's Everstraight aluminium reinforced internal doors minimise bowing

**B**owing or directional distortion of doors due to temperature differences and changes in moisture content is a frustrating and sometimes costly problem for home builders.

Corinthian's Everstraight range of aluminium reinforced internal doors minimises bowing while giving a striking contemporary look to every home.

They are ideal for those locations where there are temperature differences between each side of the door, such as garage and home, bedroom and ensuite, passageway and living room with heating appliances, and passageway and laundry.

Corinthian Everstraight doors have:

- five different V-groove, Square groove or Flush designs,
- two vertically-placed aluminium inserts for strength and stability,
- preprimed 4.75mm skins for a premium paint finish, and
- a polystyrene core to reduce noise transmission and minimise weight.

Everstraight doors can be used in all internal door locations, including cavity units where bowing can be a real problem.

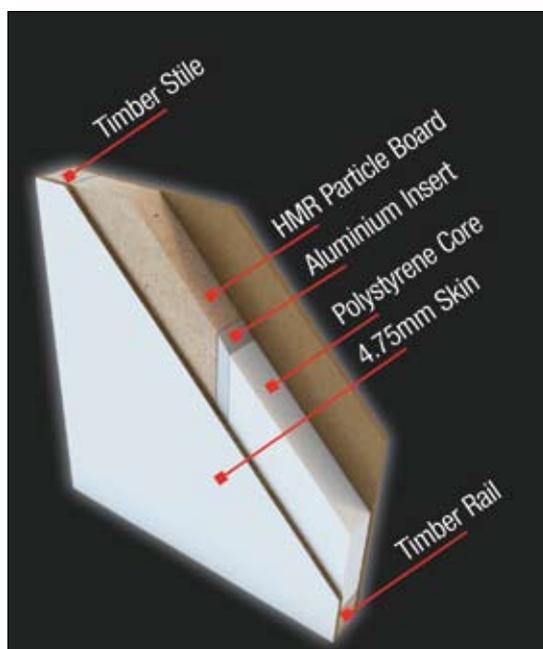
Corinthian Doors entered the New Zealand market in 2010, and has quickly gained a significant share of the home building and renovation market based on its reputation as a friendly, easy-to-do-business-with supplier of quality products.

Located in East Tamaki's well known Highbrook Office Park, Corinthian stocks a wide range of interior and exterior doors suited to the New Zealand market, including preprimed Flush Panel, V and Square groove options, 2, 4 and 6-panel doors and some speciality doors.

Corinthian doors are available from PlaceMakers stores, and generally from pre-hangers and joiners throughout New Zealand.

Corinthian is backed by the global resources and reputation of Jeld-Wen, the world's largest door and window maker, and products are guaranteed for five years.

For more information on the Everstraight range or any other Corinthian products, call Corinthian branch manager Douglas Stockenstroom on 0800 100 132.



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# Construction leaders of tomorrow return victorious

**F**ive aspiring building professionals have returned from Outward Bound elated, after winning a place on the Building and Construction Industry Training Organisation Specialist Trades Outward Bound Scholarship in September.

Ben Horn of Waihi, Joshua Inivale of Waitakere, Desmond Paseta of Manukau, Matthew Buxton of Tauranga and Rameka Thomas-Dorante of Auckland were all awarded scholarships valued at \$4090 each. Each winner passed the course with exceptional personal development results.

The aim of the scholarship is to recognise talented employees in the construction sector and develop their leadership qualities and professional networks across New Zealand.

## Reward and acknowledgement

BCITO chief executive Ruma Karaitiana says the BCITO Outward Bound Scholarship is both a reward and an acknowledgement of an employee's potential, and is aimed at helping further their skills in the workplace and in their own lives.

"To win a scholarship, the entrants had to have shown potential within the industry to step up and lead — as well as being physically fit enough to participate in the gruelling 21-day course."

Ben, a 25-year-old trainee from Mitre 10, applied for the scholarship after receiving a recommendation from a friend.

"I had heard about the scholarship but it wasn't until I was given a gentle push from a friend that I actually applied. I was absolutely rapt when I found out I had won," he says.

"The most valuable thing about the programme is building self-esteem and knowing you can always push a little bit harder and expand your limits."

Desmond, a specialist cement and concrete worker, highly recommends the course, and encourages others undertaking BCITO qualifications to apply for the scholarship in future years.

"The life lessons you learn on the course are so valuable," he says.

"One of the challenges was being dropped off at a random place in the bush and having to work out how to go it on your own.

"My only option was to learn to adapt to the situation and push through. It was a bit of a test, but that's basically what life's about — using your initiative and getting results."

The BCITO Specialist Trades Outward Bound Scholarship will be available again in 2012. Those interested in applying can check [www.bcito.org.nz](http://www.bcito.org.nz) in 2012 for details.

## Are you ready to grow?

Building demand is set to rise substantially.

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*Building and Construction Apprenticeships*

# An inconvenient truth

Architect **Don Bunting** returns to *Building Today* with some random observations about the New Zealand construction industry . . .

**C**orrect me if I'm wrong, but it was nasty untreated radiata pine that caused all the leaky buildings problems wasn't it? I'm sure that's right.

It seems a bit like blaming the lamppost for a car crash, although the car left the road, the driver was drunk and he was travelling at twice the speed limit. But the lamppost was made of untreated timber so it must have been the one at fault.

Now they've decided that some of those nice chemicals are actually a bit off — and as boron is just like taking aspirin then that's alright. Just as long as you keep all that smelly LOSP stuff in the lab. **LOSP Lab?** Where have I heard that before?

But doesn't a bit of water have to get into the timber frame before the nasty, weak untreated timber starts to decay? So how did that happen? Let's take a look at a few of the obviously completely innocent factors:

- In-line decks. That was a brilliant idea. Especially when you added some attractive ceramic tiles directly stuck to the roof membrane. Two great ideas in one.
- Solid balustrades was another idea who's time clearly had come. A really effective way to trap water on to the deck surface — and add a bit of shade to slow down any drying process.
- Parapets can look really smart too, especially if you leave off those ugly cap flashings.
- And deleting the window flashings added a nice clean (and cheap) look to the building.
- Using face sealed claddings was a clever way to ensure that any bit of water that managed to get in would stay right where it was and not leak out again.
- Polystyrene covered with a bit of acrylic paint was a simple way to make the building look as if it was made of concrete, especially if you ran the poly straight down into the topsoil. Gave a nice clean line to the building.

There is one thing I can't seem to get my head around. None of these entirely innocent factors comply with the performance statements of the Building Code. And yet nobody said, "Wait a minute, is this such a good idea? Shouldn't we question whether these new ways of building stack up? After all it is a bit windier and rainier in New Zealand than it is on the shores of the Mediterranean".

"And we have gone and stuffed all our wall cavities with insulation to keep us warm, so if water does get in it might just cause a bit of a problem."

Nobody said that. Nobody. Can't understand why. I guess after it all blew up there was such an obvious "bad guy". Nasty, chemical-free pine was such a weak, unreliable character, he had to be to blame.

## Construction Contracts Act 2002

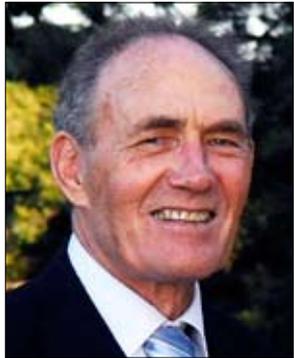
*From page 22*

connection with construction work preparation or consulting work in connection with proposed work.

This case shows an effective method for thwarting heavy handed enforcement measures issued under the Act. Parties wishing to use such an approach pursuant to the Act ought to make sure they can establish a construction contract

in the first instance before they embark on this course.

**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.



It's always good to find a scapegoat — something to reassure us that we are not the ones at fault. The Building Act is just fine. It just needs a bit of tinkering to make sure that responsibility is kept well away from those in charge.

And now we've got all those great new acceptable solutions to keep us under control. No way we can go wrong now. No way any of those clever dick designers can stray too far off line, even the ones who've

spent five years at university and 25 years in practice.

Can't let them come up with any smarter way to keep water out. That would never do. It's either "acceptable" or its not. That makes it so much easier — and safer — for everyone.

Now what about Licensed Building Practitioners? That's another really good idea. Just as long as we keep "joint and several liability" going in case one of them manages to slips through the cracks. We have to make sure there's always someone else left to blame.

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# The Construction Contracts Act 2002 — you need a provable contract first to take the benefits it provides

Tim Bates of Auckland law firm Legal Vision says under the Construction Contracts Act 2002, any party to a construction contract may refer a dispute to adjudication. But what happens if the dispute is arguably not based on a “construction contract”?



## Background

In *M Van Der Wal Builders & Contractors Ltd v Peter Walker and Philippa Dunphy* (HC AK CIV 2011-004-000083, August 26, 2011), the plaintiff (MVDW) and the defendants entered into an agreement (recorded by a letter signed and dated April 26, 2010) in respect of building and renovation work to be undertaken in Parnell, Auckland.

MVDW maintained it was a construction contract. However, the defendants said it was an agreement for MVDW to price up some proposed renovation works.

The day before MVDW was due to start building work on the defendants' property, the defendants advised they wished to delay commencement of the project.

The adjudicator noted in his decision that the owners were aware that the builder was carrying out work under the contract which he believed was in place. Rather than discussing their concerns, he said “the owners first deferred the start date for the work (to the frustration and inconvenience of the builder) and they also avoided meetings and ultimately failed to disclose to the builder they had engaged someone else to undertake the work”.

A dispute ensued regarding payments claimed by MVDW to be owing for losses allegedly suffered as a result of not carrying out the renovation works at the defendants' house.

## The adjudicator's determination

MVDW referred the dispute to adjudication under the Construction Contracts Act 2002 (Act). The defendants argued there was no construction contract (or rather no contract at all) thereby directly challenging the adjudicator's right to determine the dispute.

The adjudicator held there was a binding construction contract between the parties as he believed there was a clear framework in the April 26 letter on which a formal contract could be drafted.

He noted that price uncertainty is common in the construction industry, particularly with the level of uncertainty in the construction process. It is for that reason that construction contracts contain detailed mechanisms for additional claims, variations and alterations to the price.

It appeared to him that it was only once the builder subsequently provided the preliminary budget that the owners appeared to get “cold feet”.

He said there was no impediment on the defendants agreeing to a reduced scope and details with MVDW which fitted their needs.

Then the adjudicator considered whether or not the contract had been breached. He noted the letter of April 26 contained no unilateral right of termination and found, therefore, the defendants had breached the contract by appointing another contractor to carry out the work. A sum for breach of contract was awarded but the defendants refused to pay.

## The court's decision

MVDW made an application for summary judgment under s59 of the Act, which provides that if a party fails to pay the amount determined by an adjudicator then the other party can recover the amount due by application to a court.

The defendants contended they had a genuinely arguable defence (and therefore determination by summary judgment was inappropriate) upon the

grounds that:

- the determination on which MVDW's claim was based was invalid as there was no construction contract between the parties, and
- the adjudicator exceeded his statutory duties.

## Was there a construction contract?

This was the first time the courts (according to the judge) had dealt with an application for summary judgment to enforce an adjudicator's determination.

The judge thought it was arguable there was no construction contract — in part because a price had not been determined but, in particular, because the owners claimed to have advised the builder of budget limitations. The builder denied receiving advice about the limitations.

Clearly then, there was a dispute of a significant factual kind that could impact upon any determination of the existence of a contract.

The judge stated that the adjudicator may well be right in his conclusion there was a construction contract, but the court could not reach that conclusion on a summary judgment basis.

The judge said that whilst he may share the adjudicator's concern about the owner's failure to inform MVDW earlier of its decision not to proceed with MVDW's building services, this is not the kind of case for a robust approach to be adopted by summary determination.

## Summary

The court also held that the Act makes a distinction between determinations as to liability to make payment under the construction contract, and determinations as to parties' rights and obligations under the relevant construction contract.

Whilst the Act envisages that both are to be complied with, only the former determination is enforceable (usually by way of summary judgment) via the s59 process.

Finally, the court commented that only payments for construction work are claimable. It held that the Act does not presently authorise claims for payment in

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# What's On the Web?

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

## Asking the question

Over the past couple of months we asked our web site visitors to vote on whether they thought the Christchurch CBD should be rebuilt to the west of the current city boundaries.

**A huge 81% of respondents agreed with the idea, with only 19% against it.**

Go to [www.buildingtoday.co.nz](http://www.buildingtoday.co.nz) to vote on our latest poll question.

## Competition winners

*Building Today* congratulates William Hursthouse from Building Consultants Ltd in Auckland, who won a double pass to *Grand Designs* presenter Kevin McCloud's recent show at Auckland's Civic Theatre.

Congratulations also go to Winsome Lam of Lower Hutt, who has won a 6m x 30m (180 sq m) roll of U-Shrink weatherproofing film valued at \$1035.

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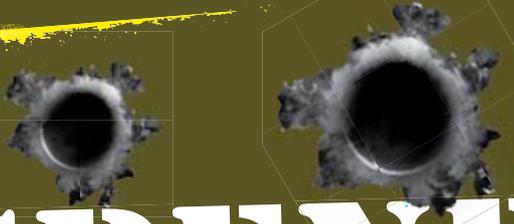
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