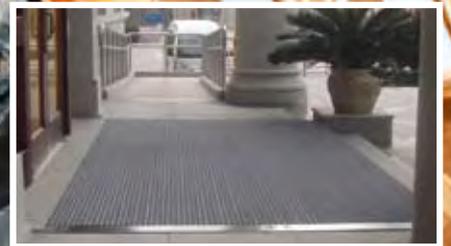




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building today

It's full steam ahead in what looks to be a year of continuing change in the New Zealand construction industry in 2012.

RMBF chief executive Warwick Quinn says although consent figures have picked up in the past couple of months, it's going to be another difficult year that will be punctuated first by the Licensed Building Practitioners scheme which starts on March 1. See pages 8 and 30 for more news on that.

Building Code changes are also likely to be passed into legislation this year, and Government response to the Commission of Enquiry into the Canterbury earthquakes will also be forthcoming.

Whatever happens, it appears that there will be growth opportunities for those in the industry with their finger on the pulse.

Good luck!

Andrew Darlington
Editor



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chief's chat

by ceo warwick quinn

A year of change

Happy New Year to you all. I hope you had an enjoyable and restful break and that the weather was kind wherever you were.

Well, I wonder what 2012 will bring us, particularly after a very tough 2011. We ended the year with a little over 13,500 new home building consents (excluding apartments), the lowest since the series began in 1965.

However, the very end of 2011 and the start of 2012 have shown a slight pick-up in activity so fingers crossed it will continue. Whatever happens, the year will still be a difficult one and, as mentioned in previous articles, close management of your businesses will be necessary and cash flow paramount to pay those bills.

March 1 is the introduction of the Licensed Building Practitioner (LBP) scheme and restricted building work. You will note the Government's "Build It Right" campaign advising home owners of the changes, so you can expect such enquiries to become more prevalent.

I suspect building consent authorities will become one of the main conduits to enlighten the public as plans are presented for consent and contractors are engaged.



The LBP scheme brings with it documentation for signing off work that the LBP did or supervised, and a record of work. While many are a little fearful of this due to a sense of greater liability, it is important to realise that you were always liable and culpable for your work anyway.

The regime introduces side benefits though, by way of better records of work.

We are not the greatest at keeping detailed notes on just what work was carried out by individuals. As a result, the lawyers have had a field day in suing all and sundry who were on the building site, and individuals (and companies) have had to spend significant amounts of money just to prove their innocence.

Many have decided to settle a claim as it has been cheaper to do so than spend the money on defending it, even though they may have been innocent.

This has led to cynicism of the joint and several liability regime, and the Government is reviewing that

at the moment. But with better detailed records of work it will be more difficult for lawyers to have a crack at you and where you are clearly not culpable for any damages/negligence based on your record of work.

But if a lawyer continues to have a go, then you should be able to seek costs more easily.

On another note, the LBP scheme and associated documentation may well entice insurance companies to look a lot more closely at what professional indemnity cover they can offer.

It has been difficult — if nigh on impossible — for individuals and companies to get such cover. This is not surprising, given that in the past anyone could be a builder, poor records of work were kept and the leaky homes scenarios was playing out. However, the LBP system may change that — hopefully.

Building Act changes are also imminent. The first lot has been through the Select Committee and the second set has been introduced into the House and will, no doubt, be referred to the Select Committee in the coming weeks. That will bring another raft of changes that will more than likely be passed this year.

The Government will also be looking to respond to the Commission of Enquiry into the Canterbury earthquake, and some building code changes are already trickling through.

A big one will be its response nationally to earthquake matters and what changes, if any, we are likely to see. But that is a work in progress at this time.

So I hope 2012 is a prosperous one for you all. It will certainly be one of change.

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Time to plan

Get things down in writing and prioritise

By RMBF president
Blair Cranston

The holiday period seems to fly by and before we know it, we are back to the reality of work and having to start thinking about the year ahead.

I routinely use early January as a time to plan and set goals for the year. It is such an important process. There are so many things to write down and prioritise. It is such a good feeling to get them on paper and start ticking them off.

I was told that once you write things down, you can afford to forget them until their time for action comes around. This is so true. Often the fact that we have lots of things spinning around in our heads results in unnecessary stress.

It is also an important time to review the previous year and honestly appraise our personal and professional performance. We can always do things better. In the book *Don't Sweat the Small Stuff at Work*, Richard Carlson identifies, among others, some great advice:

Make a list of your personal priorities

He suggests making a list of your top 10 priorities, then putting the list away for two weeks. When you take it out, try to calculate how much of your time over those two weeks went towards achieving the goals listed.

If you find that a staggering percentage of your time was spent doing other things, then you've got some work to do. The reality is that when you are busy and working hard, it's easy to postpone or overlook your true priorities.

Once you open your eyes to this pattern, it is fairly easy to change. You can begin to make minor adjustments.

Ask yourself — am I making the absolute best of this moment?

We often spend our moments wishing things were different, complaining, whining, commiserating or feeling sorry for ourselves. These thoughts are counter-productive.

However, when you're making the best of this moment,



it's unlikely that you'll be sweating the small stuff because you'll be focused on solutions and enjoyment instead of problems and concerns.

Stop scrambling

For many people, there are essentially two speeds — fast and faster. Often we scramble around, moving very quickly, doing three or four things at once. Often we are only paying half attention or half listening to the people we are working with. Our minds are cluttered and overly busy.

When we're like this, it is difficult to determine what is truly most relevant because we are so preoccupied with getting everything done.

Try to make a conscious effort to slow down — both your thinking and your actions. If you do, you will be surprised to discover that, despite the slower speed, you'll become more relaxed and far more effective.

The reason is that you'll regain your composure and be able to see the bigger picture. Your stress level will drop and it will even seem like you have more time.

Stop procrastinating

Do not delay beginning a task. Allow for the time

involved and start early enough to complete.

To get over this tendency to procrastinate requires humility. The only solution is to admit that, in most instances, you do have enough time.

But you must start a little earlier and make whatever allowances are necessary to ensure you won't be in a mad rush. Try to incorporate the gems of advice above into your 2012.

* * *

I have just completed reading the newly-released biography of Steven Jobs, the recently deceased founder and chief executive of Apple. It's a fabulous read.

Of particular interest to me was the fact that he credits part of his success to the construction industry. Here is an excerpt from the book:

The Jobs' house and others in the neighbourhood were built by the real estate developer Joseph Eichler, whose company spawned more than 11,000 homes across California between 1950 and 1974.

Inspired by Frank Lloyd Wright's vision of simple modern homes for the American "everyman", Eichler built inexpensive houses that featured floor to ceiling glass walls, open floor plans, exposed post and beam construction, concrete slab floors and lots of sliding doors.

"Eichler did a great thing," according to Jobs. "His houses were smart and cheap and good. They brought clean design and simple taste to lower income people. They had awesome little features, like radiant heating to the floors. You put carpet on them, and we had nice toasty floors when we were kids."

Jobs said that his appreciation for Eichler homes instilled in him a passion for making nicely designed products for the mass market.

"I love it when you can bring really great design and simple capability to something that doesn't cost much," he said as he pointed out the elegance of the homes.

"It was the original vision for Apple. That's what we tried to do with the first Mac. That's what we did with the iPod."

Pretty inspiring stuff for us kiwi builders.

Have a well planned and great 2012!

LBP decision a 'no-brainer'

Registered Master Builders Carters 2011 Apprentice of the Year Ryan Keogh, 22, says deciding to become a Licensed Building Practitioner was a no-brainer.

"The day I got qualified, back in October 2011, I sent my application through to be a Licensed Building Practitioner. It's about supporting building excellence," Mr Keogh says.

Now a junior foreman with Naylor Love in Dunedin, Mr Keogh says the company also supports the scheme and is active in helping staff through the process.

He says the size of the construction industry means there are some who are not yet on board with the scheme, but expects this to change rapidly — particularly as March 1 heralds the introduction of new rules by the Department of Building and Housing (DBH) which will require certain works to be carried out by, or supervised by, licensed practitioners.

"Change can be hard for some people to deal with, but at the end of the day it's change for the better.

"Everyone's different, but the numbers are getting up with the scheme, and with the introduction of restricted building work it's becoming a mandatory thing. It's similar to how some tasks in the finance world require you to be a Chartered Accountant."

While the process of becoming licensed helps to educate builders on industry best practices, consent process and so forth, it also adds a new layer of accountability.



Registered Master Builders Carters 2011 Apprentice of the Year Ryan Keogh.

"I think this is a good thing, especially if we can eliminate some of the industry's past problems such as the \$12 billion or so of leaky home damage we're now fixing," Mr Keogh says.

"With all the remedial work coming up following the Canterbury earthquakes, any scheme which makes sure it's done correctly first time around is a good thing."

Currently the licensing scheme is targeting builders, but Mr Keogh expects it won't take long for customer awareness to grow, at which point it becomes a very

simple choice for anyone planning a construction project.

"From a customer's point of view, why would you not want to have a Licensed Building Practitioner?"

Once not being licensed begins to have a direct impact on your ability to earn a living, Mr Keogh expects any stragglers will soon get on board. For those wanting to sign up, he says it couldn't be simpler.

"Organisations such as Carters put together evenings where you can go along and they'll provide a Justice of the Peace to sign your forms, someone to take passport photos and people to help organise the paperwork. It definitely streamlines the process."

Registered Master Builders has an easy-to-use online application form available to members via the members web site or, alternatively, you can phone the DBH on 0800 60 60 50 and get an application form and information on the scheme.

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 (BCITO) 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 at www.facebook.com/apprenticeoftheyear. Or for more information go to www.apprenticeoftheyear.co.nz.

Entries open in premier building competition

Entries are open in the Registered Master Builders 2012 House of the Year, in association with PlaceMakers.

2012 marks a significant change for the RMB competition when, for the first time since the inception of the Commercial Project Awards, the House of the Year and the RMB Commercial Project Awards will be run separately.

Registered Master Builders Federation chief executive Warwick Quinn is enthusiastic about starting 2012 with the House of the Year competition.

"These awards programmes continue to set a benchmark for residential and commercial building,"

Mr Quinn says.

Splitting the competition will allow us to focus on premium builds in both arenas, and highlight the skill and excellence of our members more effectively in their respective areas of expertise.

"It is an exciting change and I look forward to seeing what Master Builders enter into the residential competition."

Entries close for House of the Year on February 26, 2012. This year all entries will need to be submitted online at www.masterbuilder.org.nz.

Entries for the new RMB Commercial Project Awards open on August 6, 2012, and close on October 26, 2012.

This means that in 2012 the RMB Commercial Project Awards will not be included in the local House of the Year competition. Instead, they form their own competition, with judging taking place in late 2012 and early 2013, and the results announced at the inaugural RMB Commercial Project Awards Gala Dinner in Auckland in May 2013.

The Awards are made possible through the support of PlaceMakers, James Hardie, Gib Living Solutions®, 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.

Supreme Award winner 'blown away'

Philip Vile was "blown away" when Glenroy Housing Ltd took out the PlaceMakers Supreme Award and Registered Master Builders 2011 House of the Year, after winning the New Homes \$350,000 - \$450,000 category.

"You wouldn't expect a house in a more modest price category to take out the Supreme Award, so it caught us off guard," Mr Vile, a director of the Blenheim company, says.

The House of the Year competition is judged based on a number of considerations, but workmanship is at the top of the list.

"It just shows you don't need a multi-million dollar house to actually stand a chance."

Mr Vile says the awards are fantastic recognition for the Glenroy Housing team, some of whom have been working alongside the company for 30 years.

"They've beavered away and the quality has gotten better and better every year. After that long, it's a really good reward for everyone to feel as though they are part of something that has done so well," he says.

Judges said the builder gave more thought per square metre to this home than any other entry in the competition.

The four-bedroom Marlborough Sounds house was an intense build, with extraordinary environmental awareness, unique in its category.

"The builder delivered a 131 square metre home with an extremely high level of difficulty," competition judges said.

Mr Vile says the house had an edge, architecturally. It is a simple house, but is more involved, the closer you look.

"The architect kept spotting things that had taken me hours and hours of figuring out. It is detail of workmanship all through the house that seems small at the time, but actually takes hours and hours of work," he says.

This remote home was built on the side of a hill, with the ground full of rocks and rubble, 65km from Blenheim.

"It was a challenging site, and it faced south, but we managed to make it work. We packed a



Glenroy Housing Ltd took out the PlaceMakers Supreme Award and Registered Master Builders 2011 House of the Year, after winning the New Homes \$350,000 - \$450,000 category.

lot of punch for the dollars involved."

Mr Vile thinks all Registered Master Builders should enter the House of the Year competition if they have a house they're proud of.

"They should definitely give the competition a shot. We're glad that we allowed the owner to twist our arm to enter," he says.

Glenroy Housing Ltd joined Registered Master Builders because the directors wanted to be part of an organisation that kept them informed about the building industry.

"We didn't want to be in our own little world. We wanted to know what is happening in the industry as far as changes, technical issues and all of those things go," Mr Vile says.

"It's great to be part of something where there are other people and you can share information."

Entries for the Registered Master Builders 2012 House of the Year, in association with PlaceMakers are now open, and will close on February 26.

House of the Year will now run separately to the Commercial Project Awards, which instead will begin taking entries on August 6 for a



national gala in May 2013.

The Awards are made possible through the support of PlaceMakers, James Hardie, Gib Living Solutions®, 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.



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LBP applications soar after DBH TV campaign kicks in

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

This month: Updating the scheme as the March start date nears . . .

The number of tradespeople applying to become licensed has increased markedly since the Department of Building and Housing's consumer information TV campaign, Build It Right, began in mid-January.

Within days of the first advert running, the number of people requesting application packs more than tripled, with the licensing team sending out more packs in just a few days than what they would normally send in a month.

Up until then, the number of tradespeople becoming licensed has been on a steady incline and, as at the end of January this year, more than 11,000 tradespeople hold 14,500 licenses.

Carpentry is by far the most popular licence held, with close to 10,000 issued. The remaining 4500 licenses are made up of the six other classes: site, external plastering, brick and block, design, roofing and foundations.

Site licences have well exceeded the target, and though this licence class cannot sign off Restricted Building Work, it is a desirable licence to have, with those holding it sought after by the big contractors, such as the Project Management Offices leading the rebuild of Christchurch.

However, there is a noticeable shortage of specialists in external plastering, foundations and bricklaying, with only a quarter-to-a-half of the expected applicants applying so far.

The Department is therefore urging tradespeople working in those specialities to apply to become an LBP, and asking lead contractors to encourage specialist subcontractors to become licensed.

If subcontractors aren't licensed, then they will be unable to provide a Record of Building Work for any Restricted Building Work they do. The lead contractor will then need to sign the memorandum instead, effectively taking responsibility for the work.

Information on what Restricted Building Work means for each of the license classes (excluding site) is now available from the Department of Building and Housing

www.buildingtoday.co.nz

by contacting the call centre on 0800 60 60 50 or visiting www.dbh.govt.nz/builditright.

Licence renewal

The Licensed Building Practitioner Registrar is required to contact all Licensed Building Practitioners each year to ensure they wish to remain licensed under the scheme, and that the information the Department has is correct.

It is easy to renew your licence online by going to www.dbh.govt.nz/lbp-login. Just follow the step-by-step process to register details. Once you have completed online registration, you can renew your licence, update your skills maintenance diary and change personal details at any time.

For any questions about how to use online services, email licensing@dbh.govt.nz.

Skills maintenance

Whether tradespeople have just taken the step of getting an LBP licence or have been licensed for a while, they need to be on the look out for opportunities to improve their skills and knowledge.

LBP's must earn skills maintenance points and submit a record to the Registrar at least every two years. LBP's need between 24 and 36 points over two years, depending on the licence class.

One hour of skills maintenance equals one point

LBP's can choose skills maintenance activities that best suit their needs and the requirements of their licence class.

Activities need to inform LBP's about things such as changes to the Building Code, building materials, design technologies and good design and building practices. Most LBP's will probably find they do many of these activities anyway.

Some examples of skills maintenance are seminars, workshops, conferences, trade events, reading publications, newsletters, journals and magazines such as *Building Today*, site training and inductions.

Activities approved by the Registrar

To help with acquiring points, some activities, such as some courses and workshops, are pre-approved by the Registrar.

Approved activities are not capped — meaning there's no limit to the points that can be claimed, as long as the activities are relevant to the licence class.

The Department of Building and Housing recommends attending courses and workshops that have been approved by the Registrar, and to retain evidence of attendance.

Keep a record of your points

LBP's can update their skill maintenance online via www.dbh.govt.nz/lbp-login, or can keep a diary or electronic spreadsheet to record points. It is good practice to update it as points are accumulated.

The Registrar can ask to see evidence of skills maintenance, so it's important to keep records, a diary, receipts and other evidence showing what's been done.

If LBP's use personal records or a diary to record skill maintenance points, they will also need to update their record of skills maintenance form.

It is a good idea to keep this form as up to date as possible, as not only do LBP's gain an extra point for doing so, it will save time later on when the skills maintenance diary is due.

More about the LBP scheme

More information about the LBP scheme is available at www.dbh.govt.nz/lbp, call 0800 60 60 50 or visit info@dbh.govt.nz.

- LBP decision a "no-brainer" — page 6
- The LBP scheme: What sort of liability exposure will accompany it? — Page 30

Too many workers dying

Four construction workers died at work last year, and more than 650 were seriously hurt on building sites across the country.

Provisional statistics released by the Department of Labour recently show there were 41 workplace fatalities in New Zealand last year, with construction one of the sectors where the most harm occurred.

"Just one death is one too many — and it is unacceptable that construction has such a high accident rate in New Zealand," according to the Department's southern general manager Jean Martin.

As well as a high number of fatalities, the Department also received 661 serious harm notifications from the construction sector in 2011, which is the third highest.

"We already know the construction sector is an area where a lot of harm is occurring which is why we released our Construction Sector Action Plan last year," Ms Martin says.

"The plan sets out specific actions to reduce the work toll on construction sites, and was developed in collaboration with industry stakeholders.

"Falls from height is an area of particular concern in the industry, and we have just begun a three-year safety campaign to reduce the number of these accidents.

"Later in the year our inspectors will be visiting construction sites across the country to talk to employers about their health and safety obligations, and what they should be doing to keep their employees safe," Ms Martin says.

National Building Contract

Soon all building projects over \$20,000 will require a mandatory Building Contract by law.

The National Building Contract published by the New Institute of Architects is for use between the Contractor and the owner and is widely used within the building industry. Two versions are available to suit your needs. One is for Small Works, the General version for larger projects.

You can obtain a copy of both contracts at www.nzia.co.nz in the E-Shop.



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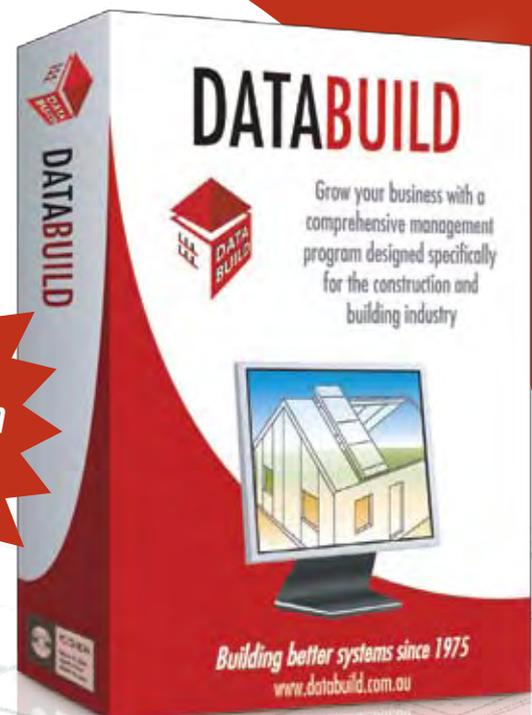
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Otaki youth studying over summer



Students from the Kapiti Coast in the WelTec workshop learning carpentry skills.

A group of 20 strong, young and enthusiastic students from the Kapiti Coast have left their surfboards and Playstations alone this summer break.

Instead of heading to the beach or sitting in front of a computer, they are inside a carpentry workshop at WelTec's Petone campus learning how to use hand tools and mastering basic carpentry techniques in a setting that replicates a real building site.

The students are enrolled in a new carpentry programme co-sponsored by WelTec and Whitireia Community Polytechnic which means they will be well placed to go into an apprenticeship in the construction industry at the conclusion of their 34-week programme.

The students, from Otaki, Manakau and Levin, have been picking up basic techniques at WelTec's Petone campus and were due to relocate to new premises in Otaki's Clean Technology Centre.

"We have a carpentry workshop with machinery set up for the students, a classroom so they can learn about consents and a building site where the students will construct a three-bedroom house," tutor Richard Carter says.

"The students will be with me for four days a week and then they will approach local employers for work experience."

Mr Carter, who lives in Waikanae and is a former self-employed builder, knows builders on the Coast and he's anticipating they will get right behind the students.

"With the great set-up we have for the students and the skills they will learn building a house we know these young people will do well. The Otaki community is welcome to come and see what we're doing here. They may even wish to purchase the students' house when it's completed."

WelTec and Whitireia Community Polytechnic have joined forces to provide trades training to students from Otaki, Paraparaumu, Porirua and Petone.

The decision to offer training in Otaki is in response to an expected boom in the New Zealand construction industry resulting from the Christchurch earthquakes, New Zealand's leaky homes and the pent-up demand for new homes following a period of historically low levels of house building throughout New Zealand.

"This is a fantastic opportunity for the local community," WelTec and Whitireia councillor Ron Wilkinson says.

Mr Wilkon has long seen the need for high quality trades training in Otaki. "WelTec has an excellent reputation in the construction industry for producing work-ready graduates. Students learn in an environment that replicates a real building site," he says.

"The tutors are experienced tradespeople who understand young people and can teach them skills and mentor them through their training. Working in partnership, WelTec and Whitireia Community Polytechnic are keen to expand opportunities with employers in Otaki to provide students with work experience and, hopefully, an apprenticeship at the end of their studies."

A further carpentry programme as part of this partnership will be offered in Paraparaumu based at Kapiti College beginning in February.

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news

Earthquake reconstruction

The New Zealand building sector will rebound from its lowest level in 10 years as the country continues to fight back from devastating earthquakes in Christchurch despite lower activity levels in other regions, according to leading industry analyst and economic forecaster, BIS Shrapnel.

But BIS Shrapnel's *Building and Construction in New Zealand 2011/12 – 2017* report warns that the numerous aftershocks are having a psychological impact on home owners' decisions on when and if to rebuild.

"The building sector in New Zealand for the year ending March 2012 has remained subdued at decade-low levels, but it is forecast to rebound 50% for the year ending March 2013," according to report author and BIS Shrapnel senior project manager Adeline Wong.

"This rebound will be backed by earthquake reconstruction activity in Christchurch and a rebound in dwelling building activity in Auckland, in particular."

Reconstruction in Christchurch and a rebound in activity elsewhere in the country will sustain annual consent value (not including infrastructure construction) at historical high levels over the five-year forecast period to 2016/17, with annual average consent value at around NZ\$10 billion on BIS Shrapnel's current estimate (potentially higher when all earthquake damage claims are processed), compared to an annual average of NZ\$7 billion over the previous 15 years.

Remediation work on leaky homes and schools is also expected to contribute to the building sector growth over the forecast period.

Dwelling consents are forecast to rebound from a 20 year-plus low of less than 15,000 units per annum in the past two years, to peak at 25,500 units in 2014/15. At this level, it still remains below the annual average of 30,000 units over the boom years of 2003 to 2005.

This lower activity level is ascribed to higher construction costs resulting from earthquake reconstruction in Christchurch, which will constrain building activity in other regions in the country.

Also, outside of Christchurch, building activity is expected to soften as home affordability worsens again in 2015, due to rising house prices and mortgage rates. As a result of supply shortage — especially in Auckland — house prices are expected to again escalate once demand for houses gathers momentum.

Although affordability will continue to act as a drag on building activity in the second half of the outlook period, a shortage of housing supply and a reversal back to net overseas migration gains will underscore house prices, especially in Auckland and Wellington.

Building consents in the "other" dwelling sector over the next five years is expected to hover closer to the underlying demand level for apartments — which is around half of the levels between 2003 and 2005 when high activity levels were driven by the construction of smaller student accommodation units.

While Christchurch reconstruction will provide a major boost to the non-residential building sector over the five-year forecast period, a pick-up is also expected in new building and refurbishment activity in the warehouse, factory and office building sectors in the North Island over the coming years, in response to stronger economic growth.

Office refurbishment activity is expected to strengthen, as owners compete to retain tenants amid oncoming new office supply. Leasing activity for commercial properties is expected to gather pace on stronger domestic and global economic growth in two-to-three years' time.

"The office building sector may have an upside if seismically-compromised buildings in

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to revitalise sector

Wellington require strengthening work to achieve low risk status and improve their capital values," Ms Wong says.

"Furthermore, hundreds of government buildings and schools in the capital city are being assessed to determine the level of risk, and whether they need to be vacated and earthquake strengthened."

Downside risks to forecasts

However, there are downside risks to BIS Shrapnel's building forecasts. Besides the known uncertainties posed by global economic issues such as the euro-zone sovereign debt crisis, the New Zealand construction industry is also facing uncertainty in the wake of continued fairly large aftershocks in Christchurch in recent months.

"Numerous aftershocks are continuing to rattle the nerves of householders, and having a psychological impact on home owners' decisions as to whether and when to rebuild, stay or relocate to other regions," Ms Wong says.

"Hence there are stronger downside risks to our dwelling consent forecasts for Canterbury and the South Island."

The non-residential building sector's downside risk is in the uncertain rebuilding outlook due to funding constraints, insurance issues and whether owners of quake-damaged properties will commit to redevelop, and their timeliness in redevelopment.

Further delays will push some reconstruction consents further out to 2013/14 and beyond.

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Minister to open Christchurch rebuild event

Minister for Building and Construction Maurice Williamson will open a forum for Christchurch's building and property professionals on February 29.

The event — Steel: the proven performer for a new Christchurch — aims to make the case for structural steel to play a leading role in the rebuilding of the city.

Hosted by industry body Steel Construction New Zealand, invited guests including local architects, engineers, builders, developers and property owners will debate the technical, commercial and design merits of structural steel.

Steel Construction New Zealand manager Alistair Fussell says seismic performance will be a key factor in deciding how Christchurch's new buildings and infrastructure are designed and built.

"The earthquake performance of the HSBC Tower on Worcester Boulevard and the Pacific Tower on Gloucester Street are great examples of steel's seismic properties. There will be a big focus on seismic performance and what this means in dollar terms for tenants and owners of new buildings not just in Christchurch but around the country," Mr Fussell says.

Forum speakers include University of Auckland associate professor Charles Clifton, Mr Fussell, and Richard McGowan of architects Warren and Mahoney.

"Steel is a leading structural solution around New Zealand and overseas, but it's not so common in Christchurch. With the draft Central City Plan currently with the Government for approval, now's a good time to be talking to the city's property professionals about how New Zealand manufactured and fabricated steel can contribute to an attractive and future-proofed CBD," Mr Fussell says.

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Christchurch draft plan hindering rebuild

Christchurch City Council's "restrictive" draft Central City Plan is undermining the Canterbury business community's efforts to rebuild, warns the

Property Council of New Zealand in a submission to the Canterbury Earthquake Recovery Authority.

Commenting on the draft Central City Plan, the Property Council argues significant amendments are required to restore confidence among the commercial

property investment community.

Property Council South Island branch president Graeme McDonald says the plan fails to acknowledge the key challenges facing existing owners of commercial property in Christchurch, while placing increasing

conditions on the construction of new buildings.

"The current draft plan includes ideological restrictions on building height, placement, floor area and parking needs, favouring a 'green' city over an economically viable city," Mr McDonald says.

Insufficient incentive

"There is insufficient incentive for property owners to rebuild or reinvest back into the CBD. The local economy will be severely at risk if capital exits the Canterbury region altogether, hindering the rebuild efforts even further."

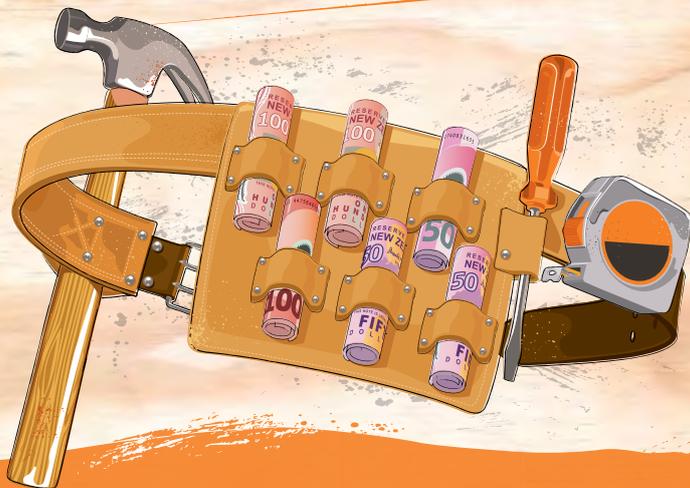
Going against advice from an Inland Revenue and Treasury issues paper on tax depreciation released in 2004, the New Zealand Government moved to deny depreciation deductibility on buildings from the 2011-12 income tax year.

"The inclusion of commercial, industrial and retail properties in the Government's tax depreciation policy is another factor significantly discouraging Canterbury's recovery.

"Removing depreciation deductibility is a direct cost to business. It will impact on the quality of infrastructure due to low incentives to reinvest, or force higher rents for businesses as landlords look to recover lost tax deductions," Mr McDonald says.

"Changes are needed to tax treatment to bring New Zealand back into line with our OECD trading partners, including Australia, Germany, Japan and the United States, allowing Christchurch to once again become an attractive investment opportunity on the international stage."

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Grow your business: getting the right people

As our industry inches closer to recovery, many builders and subcontractors will be looking to the future, and thinking about the number of people they might need.

We know there's going to be a skills shortage, and cracks are already starting to appear in areas of higher demand, namely Auckland and Christchurch.

We take a look at how you, as an employer in the construction industry, can ensure you get the right people to grow your business over the coming building boom.

For some, work is already starting to build up, and the decision to hire a new apprentice is becoming more appealing. But a lot may have changed since you last put on an apprentice, so where do you start?

You can start by calling the BCITO on 0800 422 486. We now offer a dedicated job-matching service which puts young aspiring tradespeople in contact with employers.

When you call, a team member will want to discuss your staff requirements — such as experience, and whether or not they need their own tools — in order to come up with a profile of who you're looking for.

We can then search our database on these requirements to see if anyone matches. If we can, we'll contact the job seeker and get them to contact

you directly. It will be up to you, the employer, to interview and decide whether the candidate is suitable for the job.

However, you need to consider that in some areas most apprentices with on-site experience have already been snapped up. As the industry gets busier, the reality is that employers will have no choice but to hire people with less experience.

The upshot of this is that you get your apprentice to do things the way you want them done — no bad habits to break! The BCITO will, of course, continue to market the industry to youth to ensure the best people are available.

There is also a host of things you can do to ensure you get job applications. A lot has changed in the communication world in the past few years, so here are some options worth considering:

Personal connections

Many will do this anyway, but it's worth mentioning. The chances are you know someone who knows someone who needs a job. Once you have someone on site, the BCITO can send out a training advisor to set up formal training.

Online advertising

Recent BCITO research has shown that about 90% of

our apprentices use the internet every day. So if you're going to advertise, make sure you do it online. seek.co.nz is the most popular site in New Zealand, but trademe.co.nz is catching up, with its recently-launched jobs section. Most HR people these days say you need to advertise on both web sites to cover all bases.

Traditional advertising

This is becoming less popular, and certainly doesn't get you in front of a national audience. However, it can still be effective in regional areas, targeting local people.

Unconventional methods

Here's where the power of social media can work for you. Tweet your job, or put it on Facebook. If you don't know how, ask your kids, nieces or nephews! You can also post it on the wall of the BCITO Facebook page — just search BCITO in Facebook to find us.

This costs nothing, and you will be amazed at how many responses you will get. Bear in mind that getting a job application is one thing, but finding the right apprentice is a different matter altogether.

In the next edition of *Building Today* we'll look at the types of questions you can ask your applicants to ensure they're after a career, not just a short-term job.

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So, when's this building boom? happening ●

Everyone's calling a boom, but it hasn't happened yet. BCITO **researchers** forecast mid-2012, but no-one can be certain. *But it will come.* No doubt about it.

When it comes you will need **people** and **skills** to grow your business. BCITO apprentice numbers are down by 50%, so where will this skill come from?

It is up to you to prepare now. We know it's tough to take on extra people, but you're going to need them, especially in Auckland and Christchurch.

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- You can upload digital PDFs or AutoCAD files from your computer to the Carters web site at www.carters.co.nz.
- You can drop digital and hard copies of plans into a Carters branch where they will be sent for processing.
- Multiple copies can be printed for distribution to subcontractors.

Builder feedback has been good since the service began around October last year. So for more information visit the Carters web site and click on the Carters Plan Printing Service link.

Style and Durability

Marley Stratus Design Series is the new generation of designer uPVC spouting and downpipe systems offering a stylish new 'Titanium' or 'Copper' hybrid-metallic finish to the traditional white Marley uPVC spouting and downpipes.

The recession has affected the building industry and slowed plans and renovations, however, it's not all doom and gloom, says Nick Robbers of Haarlem Developments in Raumati. "In general, people want bang for their buck, but our clients are still prioritising a unique design and don't want to compromise the project too much by cutting corners."

And design is paramount to Nick, who works in conjunction with architects on new house builds, as well as directly with clients on home renovations. Haarlem Developments three-man team recently completed a 196 square metre, 4-bedroom contemporary family home, where he first used the new Marley Stratus Design Series. "The architect specified the traditional white 'Typhoon' shaped Marley spouting and downpipe system, with the intention of painting it to match the roof, but the plumber that was installing the system suggested we use Marley Stratus Design Series in 'Typhoon Titanium'," he explains.

Nick was pleased with the finished result, as was the client, "The 'Titanium' not only looked sharp, but the use of internal brackets was cohesive with the understated style and design of the house."

Nick believes uPVC is an excellent offering due to its longevity; it will never rot, rust or corrode. Moreover, it's a significant advantage to his team that Marley systems are convenient to purchase and easily installed. "Marley is a market leader in uPVC spouting and downpipes and the products are readily available; you can pick it off the shelf or the new Marley Stratus Design Series can be ordered and available in store in just 48 hours." When working with Marley Stratus Design Series for the first time, Nick chose to have a plumber install it – so that his team could continue with the build. "The system is very easy to install and comes with comprehensive installation instructions; I'd say anyone who reads the instruction booklet could confidently put it up."



Having made such a good first impression, Haarlem Developments have since used Marley Stratus Design Series again. "We were building a beachside home for a client and the product really appealed to the client for several reasons – the cost factor, no corrosion, the low maintenance and speed at which it could go up. The roofers did it as part of their contract and because they installed it as they put the roof up, it streamlined the build," says Nick.

Marley systems are built to last and come with a 15-year guarantee – something that Nick appreciates. "Because it's New Zealand made, Marley is designed for our unique weather conditions."

The Marley Stratus Design Series is currently available in Marley's half round Typhoon profile in 'Copper' and 'Titanium' and 80mm round downpipe, with a complete range of matching moulded accessories such as expansion joiners,

brackets, stop-ends, internal and external angles and downpipe bends available to provide a complete rainwater system. The system also comes with a colour matching solvent cement. If the off-the-shelf product range doesn't quite meet your needs, Marley also offers a fabrication service, which can provide special part requirements, such as special angle flat, special angle rake, special outlet and special adapter, which can be fabricated to your required dimensions.

"While it's not been a deal-breaker with any of my clients so far, moving forward, the fact that Marley's spouting and downpipe systems are 100% recyclable will certainly hold appeal to those looking for a greener build," says Nick. In fact, Marley is committed to protecting the environment.

See Marley's website for more details on the Marley Stratus Design Series design and installation www.marley.co.nz

The Alumat advantage

Alumamat has launched a new range of aluminium entrance matting designed to fill a need in commercial as well as a growing number of quality residential buildings.

Many specifiers and builders are familiar with the often used aluminium strip and Coral Brush Activ infill used in many offices and shops throughout New Zealand.

The Alumat AL10 Interlock is designed to meet this need. It is just 10mm deep so it can be used in a shallow tile recess, or it can be surface mounted with the optional ramping option.

At first glance they appear to be the same as others on the market today, but closer examination shows the design and materials provide features of real improvement.

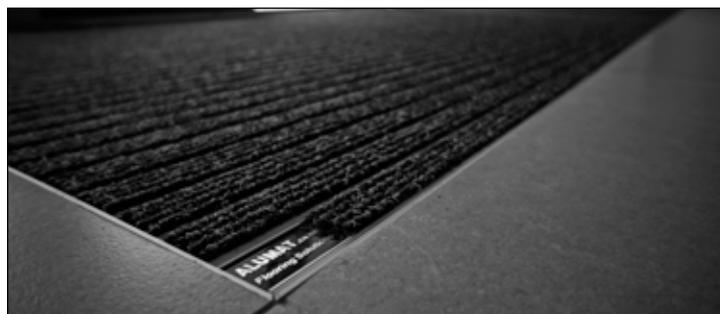
For example:

- The optional ramping on the AL10 Interlock is a neatly prefitted and integral part of the mat. So no special installation is required, and no drilling or screws into a marble floor to hold the separate ramping sections in place is required.
- Overall infill coverage is increased to 80%, giving greater abrasion to clean shoes and to absorb moisture.
- Superior 6463-T5 corrosion-resistant magnesium alloy is used instead of standard aluminium for longer life, and anodising is standard for all extrusions used.



Above: The optional ramping on the AL10 Interlock is a neatly prefitted and integral part of the mat.

Below: The matting supplied for the Marcellin College auditorium in Auckland.



- Recommended infills are ribbed to improve cleaning function. Made by the leading Belgium manufacturer Bealieu Real, they come with a 5-year warranty. Coral Brush Activ is also available if required as an optional variation.

The most surprising aspect about the Alumat AL10 Interlock is that it will reduce costs from 25% to 30% or more on comparable matting systems.



The detail on the Alumat AL10 Interlock.

However, Alumat offers much more than an alternative for the current aluminium and Coral Brush Activ infill mats. They make a comprehensive range to provide a total solution to cleaning foot traffic before entering a building.

Alumat's Dave Probett says in Europe it is common to design entrances with different matting, both outside and inside the entry lobby, to properly clean shoes.

"The saving on cleaning and protecting the interior of the building beyond the entrance can be considerable, making the installation of a properly designed matting system an excellent investment," Mr Probett says.

"To that end, Alumat has a range of different mats that, while looking similar, work quite differently in different situations. For example the AL10 Interlock is a closed interlocking mat ideal in sheltered entrances.

"And there is a range of open mats more suitable for outside all-weather situations that can drain. Mat depths can range from 10mm through to 40mm."

Full specifications can be viewed at www.alumat.co.nz, and a brochure of available products and design considerations can be requested by phoning 09 473 1602.

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By Lifetime Design Ltd
ambassador Graeme Sinclair

When Lifetime Design managing director Andrew Olsen first arranged a meeting with me to discuss a relationship with myself and the Lifemark, I thought "Here we go, what's this all about."

But I can honestly say he had me on board in the first five minutes, with the reason being that it just made common sense."

In fact, the Lifemark makes so much sense to me that my family and I have just built a new home in Stillwater, just north of Auckland, designed entirely to Lifemark Design standards.

The Lifemark is a set of common sense design standards that everyone should consider when designing or renovating a home.

It's the construction industry's equivalent to the Heart Foundation tick, so is a third party endorsement which represents quality and safety for all members of the family, no matter what age, stage or ability. This suits our busy family perfectly, especially with me in a wheelchair.

We worked with Tim and the building team at Jennian to build our new home. At the beginning, we discussed our design objectives, and the Lifemark standards slotted in perfectly.

So much so, that Jennian are looking to design and build their Tomorrow's Showhomes in Dunedin and Auckland Central with the Lifemark.

It's the simple things that we usually don't consider, such as level entry access, wider doorways, lever handles, and even a bedroom on the ground floor.

These are all simple features which not only make life easier for myself, but which are also applicable to my wife Sandee and our kids.

For example, it's great to have a wide doorway for bringing the

groceries in from the car, plugs and switches are at an easy-to-reach height for everyone, and there is level access all through our house — there are absolutely no steps, so there is nothing to trip over when carrying food and drinks out to the deck while we are entertaining.

The resource that Lifemark supplied throughout the build made the process so easy — and, most important, the specific design features did not cost that much more!

I totally agree with what Andrew and his team at Lifemark are doing to improve the future of New Zealand's housing stock, and believe it is of the utmost importance.



New Lifemark Design ambassador Graeme Sinclair bags another one!

If you are not already aware, the housing stock in New Zealand is struggling to accommodate our changing demographics — namely the ageing population and the statistics that consequently come with this.

Currently, we are heading for all sorts of trouble if this is not addressed. This is why I have put my name to the organisation by becoming an official ambassador for Lifemark.

Oh, and if you become a Lifemark-accredited member during March, I might even take you fishing!

Call Lifemark on 0800 LIFEMARK or email info@lifemark.co.nz to find out how to become an accredited member and enjoy the business opportunities that come with being a member.

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Saxton Oval Pavilion a winner for Nelson region

By Roy Kane

Saxton Field is a \$50 million, 75 hectare sports ground which, together with the \$12 million Saxton Stadium, provides facilities for hockey, softball, football, archery, cricket and athletics, as well as five basketball/netball courts, 12 volleyball courts, a main 500-seat sports hall for tournaments, a dedicated table-tennis hall, and sport administration offices for several codes.

It is a regional facility meeting the sporting and recreational needs of the Nelson and Tasman regions. The latest development of the plan is the new Saxton Oval Pavilion that caters for cricket, football and athletics.

"The new pavilion is a shared facility," Nelson City Council principal adviser, reserves and community facilities, Andrew Petheram says.

"The brief given to Arthouse Architecture was for an iconic building that clearly identified the Nelson region, while remaining simple, functional and cost-effective." Mr Petheram says.

"The facility is also to be available for community social use when not required as a sporting venue."

Arthouse Architecture director Jorgen Andersen says his team responded to the brief at a time when the firm's computers were temporarily down because of a server crash.

"We all sat around our boardroom table and brainstormed. Essentially what we came up with was a cylinder 100m long by 20m wide. It is positioned between the cricket/football field and the athletics oval, and can comfortably serve both sides simultaneously," Mr Andersen says.

"Our design was for 20 portals, and rather than use laminated timber to create the curved portals, we elected to use steel, which had the advantage of being slimmer.

"We considered zinc sheeting for the cladding but opted for corrugate because of cost. Also, it could be bent to meet our chosen low profile without any loss of aesthetic appeal. One added benefit of our design was that the



The pavilion fits snugly between the cricket/football field on one side and the athletics oval on the other.

building could be naturally ventilated."

As the steel constructor on the project, Christchurch-based Chapman Engineering Ltd quickly got the fabrication of the steel portals underway.

Managing director Chris Chapman says the portals were fabricated by profiling the curved web from plate steel.

"The flanges were fabricated by welding rolled steel flat to the web. Being already stretched, the flats could be welded to the web with no major issues of warping or buckling, so long as we didn't put too much heat into the welds. We used a jib to make sure that the web and flanges stayed in place," Mr Chapman says.

"The steel portals were fabricated in two halves to be joined at the centre of the

apex once on site. They were transported from Christchurch to Nelson — a round trip of 848km — in two loads, with a separate delivery of purlins.

"Erection was straightforward. The concrete slab under each portal had cast-in bolts, making it possible to fit the steel perfectly to the foundation. This also kept the slim portal legs from spreading apart, and prevented twisting.

Continued page 26



PROUD TO BE THE MAIN CONTRACTOR FOR THE NEW SAXTON OVAL PAVILION

The team at Scott Construction would like to congratulate the Nelson City Council on its exciting new sports facility.

A special thanks to all of our subcontractors for their extra efforts, which contributed to the successful completion of this project on time.

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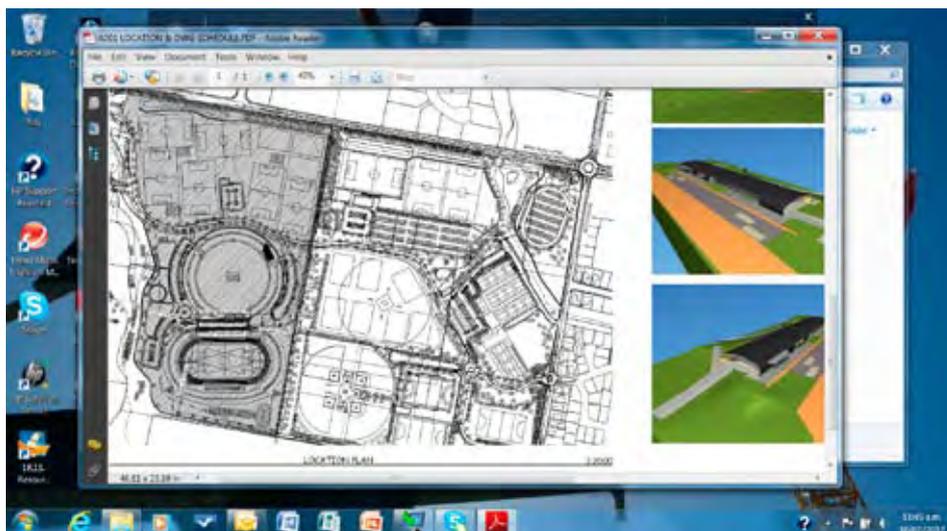
From page 25

The purlins simply butted into the sides of the curved rafters.

"The steel frame was modular and repetitive — except for the two ends where the first portals obviously had no posts. Two half-portals for one side of the building were stood in the assembly area, where purlins were fitted to maintain their shape. They were then lifted from the assembly area onto the holding down bolts in the concrete slab.

"Their apexes rested on centre posts. A matching opposite pair was then stood and also fitted with purlins. Once this pair was placed, the completed curve was bolted. Each bay was self-supporting, so that when a follow-on pair of portals was placed, the resulting gap to the previous pair was closed by the fitting of the purlins.

"The entire job was erected by two riggers and a welder. Having been grit-blasted and coated in epoxy zinc before being despatched from our workshop in Christchurch, the steel was given a final top coat once erected," Mr Chapman says.



The site plan. In the shaded section the pavilion is situated between the circular cricket/football field and the athletics oval.

Freeman Roofing supplied the corrugate, rolling the sheets on site ready for erection. Wayman Roofing erected the cladding. Since the "roof" also became the "walls", Chapman Engineering had to pay particular attention to maintain the purlins in an absolute straight line along the length of the building.

For its interior, Saxton Pavilion uses plywood

to wrap around its curved bay walls. It has changing facilities at both ends, with umpires and referees accommodated separately from teams.

There is a first-aid room and a lounge, which has a dropped acoustic ceiling. Sliding panels open up a full commercial kitchen and a bar, which can cater for 130 people with no echo. Heating is needed only in the athletics control room.

Funding for the entire Saxton Field was provided jointly by the Nelson City Council and Tasman District Council. Generous grants were also made by the New Zealand Community Trust, Canterbury Community Trust and the New Zealand Lottery Grants Board.

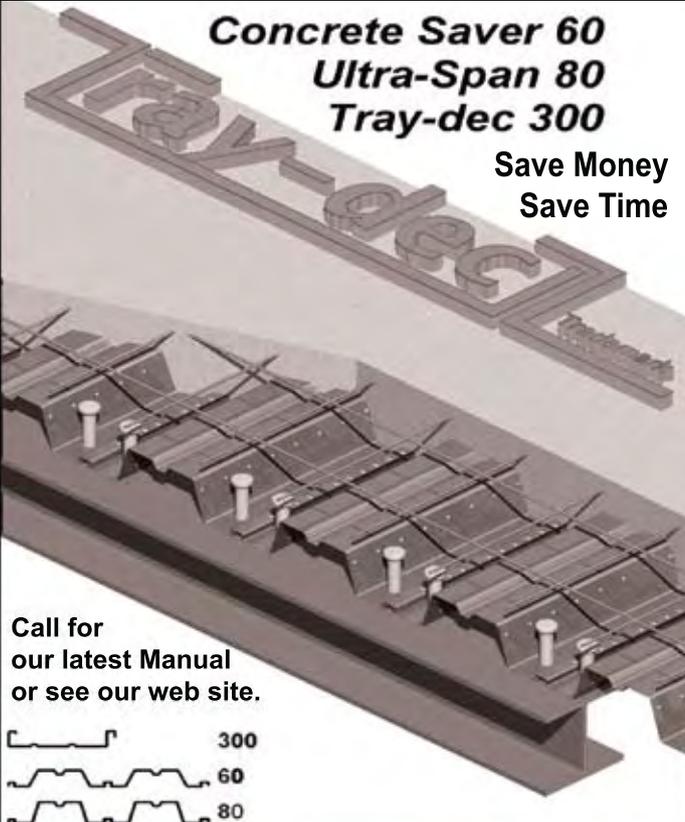
The Saxton Field Stadium Society also contributed to the project, overseeing the construction phases of the stadium throughout 2009. The Tasman Regional Sports Trust will manage the Saxton Stadium, with Sports House now the regional hub for the sports administration of many codes.

The Saxton Oval Pavilion takes its place as the latest facility serving the sporting, recreational and social needs of the community at the Top of the South.

Arthouse Architecture is very proud of this project for its aesthetic, its response to the site and the way it satisfies the demands of serving many user groups, sometimes using opposite sides of the pavilion at the same time.

"It's always a challenge to deliver a unique building within a fixed budget, but we are delighted with the result here. We wanted to create an iconic building but one that nestles into the landscape without dominating," Mr

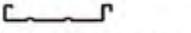
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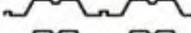


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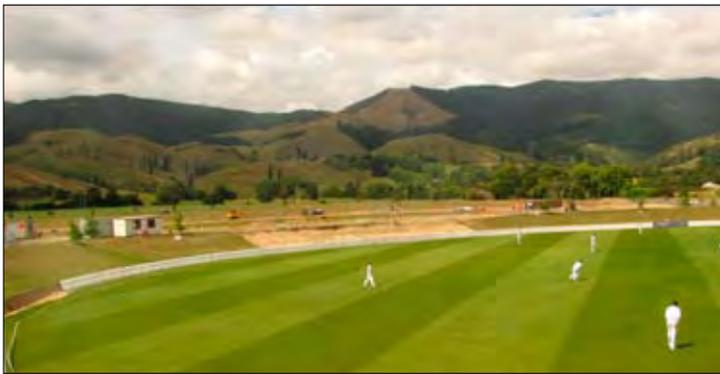

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Above: Time-lapse photography of the project's construction.



The entrance.

Andersen says.

The main contractor on the Saxton Oval Pavilion project was Nelson-based Scott Construction Ltd. Managing director Justin Candish says his company tendered for the contract on his company's attributes rather than price.

"We worked closely with Chapman Engineering to ensure we had an efficient methodology that would make us price competitive," Mr Candish says.

"Our approach was such that although the Christchurch quakes disrupted our programme, we were still able to complete the project by our target date.

"The local communities tell me they're impressed by the pavilion, and they're glad their council chose an out of the ordinary design by local architects. As a sporting venue, Nelson will be giving Queenstown a run for its money!"

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Our Old Government Buildings

Dr Kerry Rodgers ruminates upon Wellington's wooden poster-child



British architect Andrew Waugh recently spoke eloquently on national television as to the virtues of wood, specifically when it comes to rebuilding Christchurch.

He is not the first to highlight the wholesale destruction that came to brick, stone and even concrete and steel buildings during Christchurch's manifold quakes, particularly when compared with the relative survival of many wooden structures.

But Waugh spoke with authority backed by having designed the world's tallest wooden building. And he made his statement in front of the largest wooden building in the Southern Hemisphere — and the second-largest wooden building in the world: Wellington's Old Government Buildings (OGB).

OGB was commissioned back in the 1870s when the government of the day anticipated the country's provincial governments would soon be abolished.

They wanted a Neo-Renaissance-style palace that would make a statement of New Zealand's growing nationhood and its place in the Empire on which the sun never set.

But, as is the way of governments around the globe, when push came to shove, they opted for cheap over concrete, and plumped for doing it in timber alone.

Nonetheless, they asked the architect to mimic stone in the buildings' facade. Kauri planks had already shown they were ideal for faking it at Government House in Auckland some 15 years earlier.

The architect was William Clayton and the contractors Scouler and Archibald. Construction took 22 months and the largest building in the country opened in 1876 at a cost of £39,000. Today it is regarded as one of the country's most important historic buildings.

Its vulnerability to fire was recognised quite early, with OGB becoming the first building in the world with a smoke-free policy.

It initially housed the entire New Zealand Cabinet and all the Wellington-based civil service. But the civil service grew rapidly — as they do — with the first department leaving the building soon after opening, despite extensions that included the wings being added in 1897 and 1907.

By 1975 only the Education Department remained.



When they finally vamoosed come 1990, the empty building was given a total restoration.

Johnny-come-lately partitions were dumped. Multiple layers of paint were stripped. Long-gone features were restored, such as the verandahs, late Victorian water radiators, the original clock and coat of arms, a water-powered hydraulic lift, and even the fireplaces, if only as decorative features.

Importantly, the staircases were reinstated in their full

glory.

The totara piles were replaced with concrete, and the structural framing of Tasmanian hardwood augmented where necessary with good old pinus radiata. More than 500 cubic metres of recycled kauri was needed to repair or replace original timber weatherboards, flooring and finishing timbers.

Today, a limited number of rooms are open to the public, with the majority leased to the Victoria

Mine is bigger than yours

Architect Don Bunting expounds some random observations about the construction industry at large . . .

Last year I visited the World Financial Centre in Shanghai. One hundred storeys high and, for about five minutes, it was the tallest building in the world. By now it's probably been surpassed by two or three other buildings in Dubai alone.

The World Financial Centre, anecdotally called "the bottle opener" because of its distinctive cut out shape between the 94th and 100th floors, is a very elegant shape on the Shanghai skyline.

And I'm sure it provides lots of valuable office space for young men and women to make money for financial corporations by gambling on the rising or falling value of currencies.

But I'm sure that it would have been just as efficient, possibly more so, if it was half as high and twice as wide. Or if it had been designed as two smaller towers.

I suspect that it was decided by whoever developed the site that there was value in being the tallest, however brief that reign might have been. That much over-used architectural term "iconic" was no doubt lurking around during the early design meetings as well.

The shape of the cut-out at the top had an interesting gestation. The first design had a round cut-out, with the idea that it might contain a giant wind turbine — probably one that would cost \$10 million and generate about 1 watt of electric power.

But it still would have been environmentally friendly wouldn't it? Just don't look too closely at the economics.

The developers finally decided that a round shape was not a good idea. One reason given was that a round shape looked too much like the Japanese flag. Not that the "Japanese" thing was an issue — it just wasn't Chinese enough.

After trying a range of shapes they finally decided on a slightly tapering rectangle. This then allowed them (these damned architects again!) to insert a "Skywalk" slung underneath the 100th floor, complete with glass sides and a glass floor.

A completely useless appendage, other than being able to attract a few tourists into the building.

This was hardly a great business generator, as the only things in the gift shop were the usual cheap tourist geegaws. The only difference here was that they were all shaped



like the tower — even the bottle openers.

Why do we do it? Why do we persist in building the tallest, or the most grotesquely shaped, or the biggest, or the most outrageous?

I've seen a building in Macao that was designed to look like a giant lotus flower. I understand there is even a new High Court in Wellington that is designed to look like an egg. No reason, it just seemed a clever thing to do.

Some people blame the computer, especially the latest gimmick called Building Information Modelling, or BIM.

But Geary, the designer of the Guggenheim Museum in Bilbao, Spain, designed that building well before such smart software was available. He also used cardboard models to illustrate his designs, not clever digital images. So you can't blame the computer.

I remember the British architect Will Allsop — a man who once designed (and even sold the design for) a block of apartments based on Marge Simpson's hair — saying that he used to put his most outlandish designs in the window of his offices.

This was done just to peeve off Sir Norman Foster who walked past each day on the way to his own offices.

Is it a bloke thing? Got to have the biggest — wallet, car, house, whatever — or is it something else? The Guggenheim works for Bilbao. And the Sydney Opera House (which looks pretty tame now) cost \$100 million to build and now attracts, both directly and indirectly, at least a billion dollars to the Aussie tourist economy every year.

But neither of these examples is tall. The only ones that are — the Eiffel Tower (meant to be only temporary) and the Empire State Building — are much more elegant examples from a bygone age.

Today, big, tall and brash is the only way to go.

University School of Law.

From Christchurch's viewpoint, it is worth noting the building is constructed on reclaimed land from the 1855 earthquake. It is situated near a major fault line and has survived several significant quakes such as that of 1942 with nary a scratch.

Proponents of the use of wood in reconstructing Christchurch point to the Knox Church as one of the few historic buildings in the red zone that may be saved. It lost bricks and mortar but its substantial wooden frame is still standing largely intact.

The media quoted NZ Wood's James Guiver on his product's virtues: "Wood is lighter and won't suffer the same damage." . . . "It acts as a series of elastic bands inside the building, so when it is under a lot of force the building will move around a little bit."

For his part, Andrew Waugh advocated constructing buildings inside Christchurch's red zone similar to his nine-storey London apartment block.

He notes they can be assembled quickly: "Prefabricate the walls, the floors, crane them in, and screw them together.



The LBP scheme — what sort of liability exposure will accompany it?

Tim Bates of Auckland law firm Legal Vision discusses whether a builder's or contractor's exposure to liability increases with the commencement of the Licensed Building Practitioners scheme next month.



The Licensed Building Practitioner scheme comes into force on March 1, 2012.

In broad terms the scheme was set up with the aim of ensuring that people in the building industry who are responsible for the work done are competent and accountable, so that homes are designed and built right first time.

From March 1, 2012, building practitioners must be licensed in order to carry out or supervise work on homes and small-to-medium sized apartment buildings — work that is critical to the integrity of the building.

This "restricted building work" applies to foundations,

framing, roofing and cladding work. It also applies to active fire safety systems in medium-sized apartment buildings. A limited exemption will be available to owner-builders ("do it yourselfers").

A common legal question that has been posed to this firm in conversations with clients and people in the industry is what effect the new scheme will have on the average builder's/contractor's exposure to liability.

The bulk of the current exposure of builders/contractors to construction work completed stems from contractual liability to a contracting party, or tortious liability in negligence to parties that a builder may never have met or contracted with.

The source of the contractual liability is, of course, the contract, whereas the negligence liability originates from the fact that a builder or contractor will be held to owe a duty of care to the ultimate end users of the building works (such as a home owner).

Currently, a common defence that a person who has carried out the building work may be able to run successfully when claims are brought against him, is that he was only carrying out this work as an employee/agent/director of a building company. Immunity to personal liability is therefore claimed.

Whilst the Weathertight Homes Tribunal and the High Court to a lesser extent have attempted to pierce this corporate veil immunity argument, it is still good law and is supported by at least two Court of Appeal decisions.

The introduction of the LBP scheme will not change anything in terms of the application of the law governing builders' liability to end users. However, practically speaking, it certainly will make builders carrying out restricted work far more identifiable.

This is because the council, no doubt as part of ensuring that the work has complied with the Building Act 2004 in all regards, will need to be satisfied that an LBP has, in fact, carried out or supervised the restricted work.

There is likely to be the need for a certificate or producer statement submitted by the LBP, certifying that he is an LBP, and that he has supervised or carried out the restricted work to the requisite level.

This document will, no doubt, be retained on the council file, so that in the future should there be any problems with construction work, a potential claimant can search the council file and quickly identify the LBP.

Previously, a builder acting as an agent for a company may not specifically have been identified on the council file.

It seems that it may well be almost impossible to argue that an LBP is not personally liable for his/her own acts or omissions, even if he is acting as an agent/director of a construction company.

The most likely approach for the courts to take in considering whether a duty of care is owed would be to hold that a person who has qualified as an LBP and provided producer statements/certificates as an LBP for any particular construction job, owes a duty to exercise reasonable skill and care to the end user of the construction work (such as a home owner).

It is important to note that on the standard application form for an LBP doing carpentry work, it is only contemplated that an individual, rather than a company, can register as an LBP.

In summary then, the question often posed to this firm can be answered in this way.

The LBP scheme has not expanded the liability of builders/contractors. However, it does make builders carrying out restricted building work readily identifiable, and most probably personally liable for their work.

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

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