

BUILDINGTODAY



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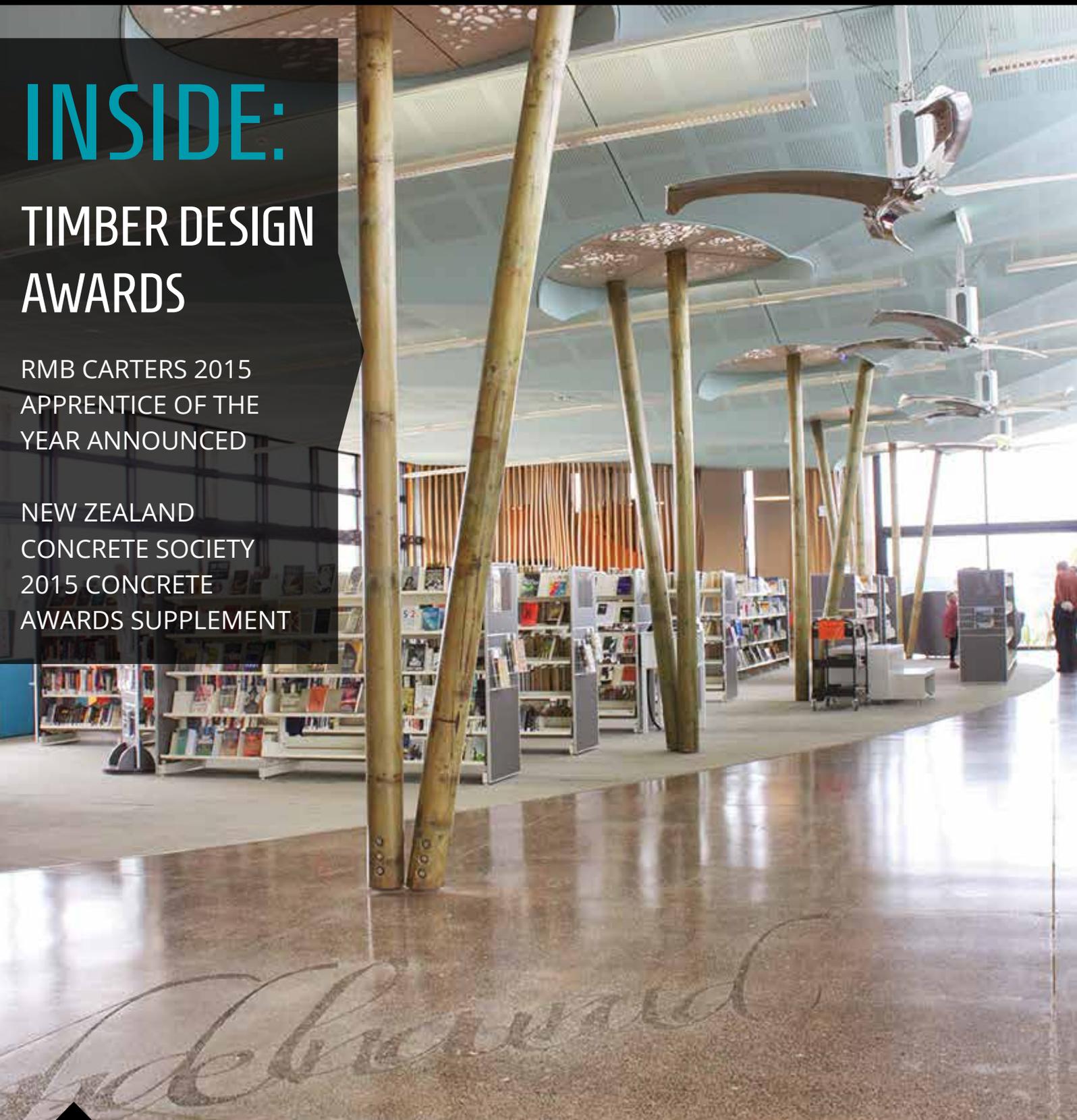
OCTOBER 2015

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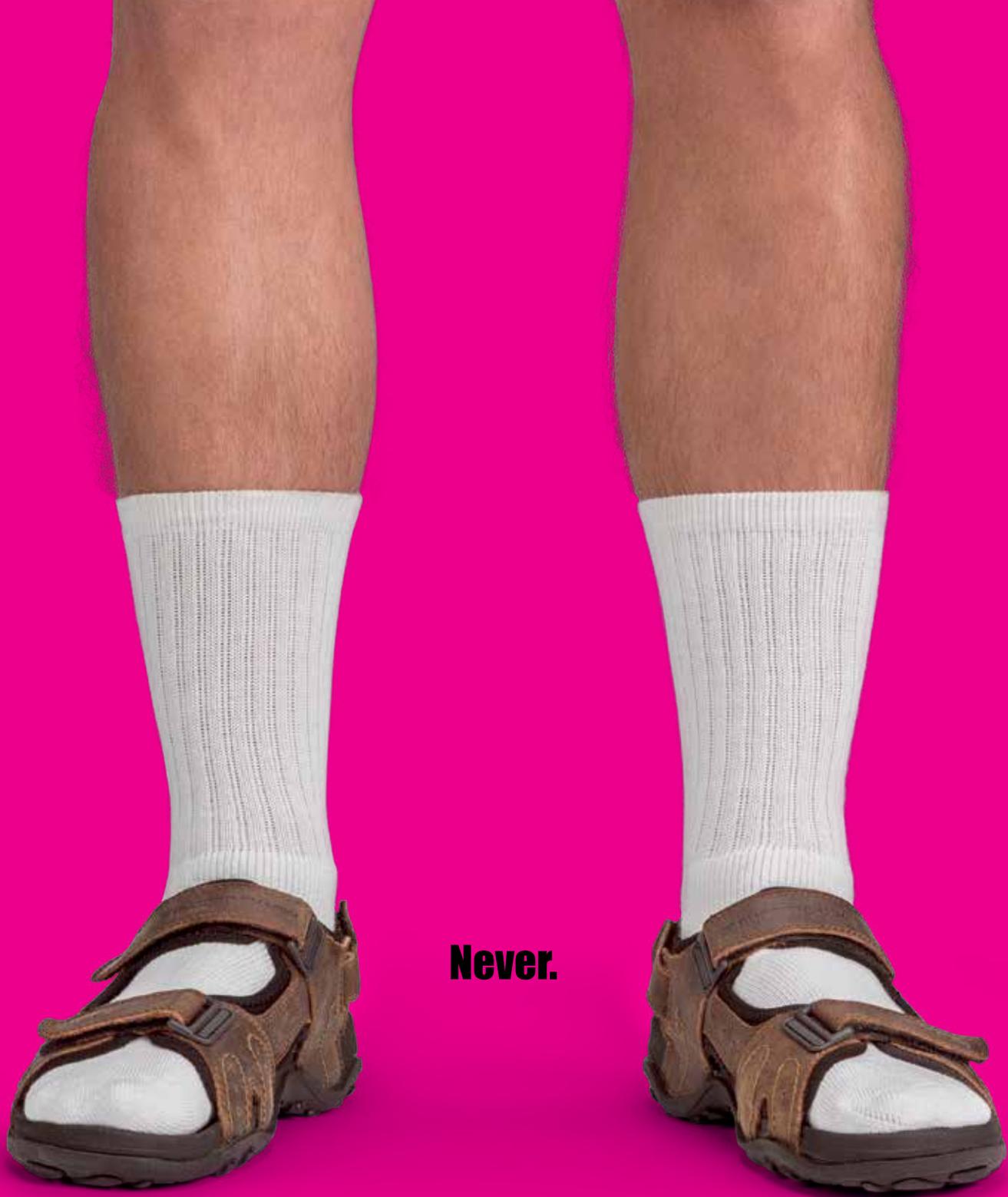
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NEW ZEALAND
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FROM THE EDITOR

The recent Loopy Rules Report has confirmed what columnist Mike Fox has already been telling us — that construction laws in New Zealand are a mess and need attending to immediately.

RMBA chief executive David Kelly says a throwaway comment by a Government minister regarding self-certification — an issue raised in the report — was seized upon by the media, invoking images from the leaky homes crisis and another proliferation of cowboy builders.

However, both men admit that the industry is not ready for self-certification, but that quality concerns surrounding the LBP scheme still need attention.

The report has provided plenty of food for thought though, and *Building Today* would certainly welcome readers' views on it.

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Cowboys and self-certification

Chief's Chat

By CEO David Kelly

There was an interesting short flurry of media activity a couple of weeks ago after the release of the Task Force Report on what was termed "loopy rules".

While there was a range of areas identified, the area that the media jumped on was a suggestion that builders could self-certify building work, without council oversight.

The media latched on to a what was a throwaway comment from a Government minister with very little detail on what that would actually entail.

It received a range of reactions, including the obvious one that it could open the door to the sort of situation that allowed the leaky homes crisis to occur.

It also raised suggestions by some that it would allow cowboy builders to run amok.

In fact, the report itself is more balanced, and included the following passage:

"Demonstrating professionalism should attract a premium and distinguish a good builder from a bad one. The (LBP) scheme could reward good builders and encourage the pursuit of excellence. Only a third of builders belong to one of the two industry associations, and this proportion needs to increase as builders embrace the idea of greater professionalism."

From a Master Builders Association point of view this is hard to argue with. The report then went on to say:

"More skilled builders are needed, but building sector groups tell us there is no plan for how to achieve this. The Ministry of Business Innovation and Enterprise should develop a strategy in conjunction with the sector to make this happen.

"Self-certification exists among electricians and gas fitters. This provides a better way of operating because it puts the onus on the person doing the work to perform. One objective of the strategy must be for builders to reach the level of skills required for self-certification."

Unfortunately this got lost because of



comment made out of context. The debate we should be having is how we become more professional as an industry, and how we encourage people working in the industry to join a trade association that promotes best practice — not an overly simplistic argument about self-certification or not.

I believe we also need to get back to the discussion about risk-based consenting, where the sign-off process depends on the level of risk involved and the competence of those signing off.

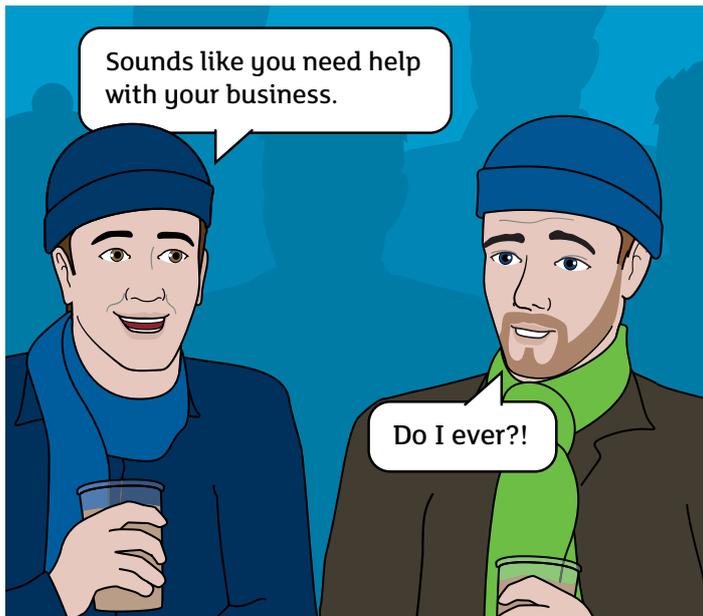
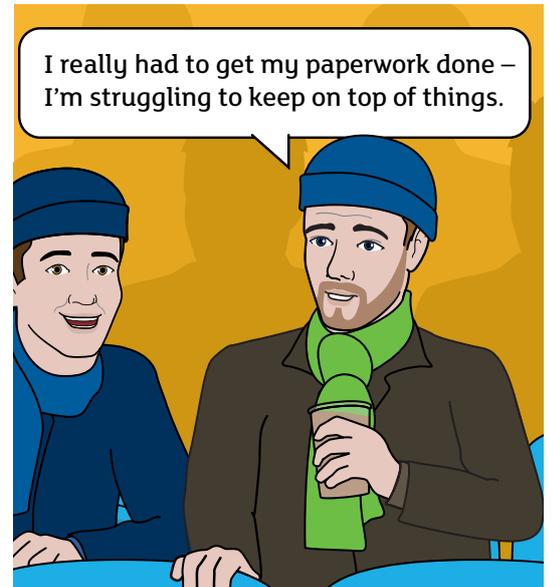
This was announced five years ago, but we have made very limited progress since.

It also needs to be considered at the same time as a review of how well the LBP scheme is working.

That is not to say we should do away with it, but we do need to look carefully at quality concerns that have been raised.

The RMBA has previously raised the issue of licensing of businesses, as this is where consumers look to for redress. This all needs to be thought about as one package, rather than separate discussions that are not properly connected.

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Challenging renovation comes out top

Jonny Lewis was thrilled when he heard his company was awarded the Marlborough, Nelson and West Coast Registered Master Builders 2015 Renovation of the Year award, as well as a Gold Award and overall category win for the Mitre 10 Renovation \$250,000 - \$500,000 category.

Mr Lewis, of J Lewis Building Ltd, knew this was a special renovation that took a lot of hard work. He was pleased that the team was able to be recognised for such a great project.

"We were confident that this renovation would do well in this year's competition, based on the breadth of the project, but we're thrilled to take out the top award in the region.

"The renovation was a big one, and we went over every detail with a fine-toothed comb to make sure it was perfect for our clients."

It was a challenging renovation for the three builders from J Lewis Building, and Mr Lewis explains that the main obstacle was the style of the home.

"The house had curved walls and lots of different angles and tricky details that we had to work with. The hardest thing was to ensure everything fit within the building codes, but that it also functioned well and would be pleasing to the eye."

Judges called this a well-executed renovation and an inviting Nelson home.

"The builder did a fantastic job of meeting the client's brief and expectations. A stand-out feature was the kitchen which was beautifully integrated with an outdoor entertainment space," they said.

"The curved facade proved to be a challenge which was overcome superbly, and made the most of the fantastic view. Both the finishing and workmanship were a credit to the builder."

Mr Lewis says winning House of the Year is a fantastic way to get your name out there in the industry, and build credibility for your business.

"House of the Year is a really beneficial competition. Winning the award gives clients the peace of mind that when they work with you, they know they're working with a quality



J Lewis Building won the Supreme Award and Marlborough Nelson West Coast Registered Master Builders Renovation of the Year, and the Gold Award and Category Winner of the Mitre 10 Trade Renovation Award \$250,000 - \$500,000 for a home in Nelson.



builder who they can trust.

"Our clients know we're customer focused, and we will do whatever it takes to build their dream home."

Mr Lewis says being a Master Builder is invaluable. "The brand of Registered Master Builders has such a strong presence in the market. People recognise it, it's trustworthy and it enables us to showcase our work."

Mr Lewis is looking forward to entering the competition in 2016, and is already working on

a project that he thinks could be another winner.

"The competition is great for the industry, and celebrates excellence across the sector. We can't wait to continue to enter our projects into future competitions."

The Awards are made possible through the support of PlaceMakers, Master Build Services, James Hardie, GIB, Nulook, SafetyMate, Carters, ITM, Plumbing World, Resene, Westpac and Mitre 10.

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Unexpected win for Waiheke builder

A first-time entrant in the Auckland Registered Master Builder's House of the Year awards took out a top trifecta of awards in the Auckland region — scooping the Supreme House of the Year, the Gold Award category win for the Westpac New Home over \$2 million, and the Craftsmanship Award.

Kevin O'Grady of K2 Builders says he was stunned to hear his name read out as a winner not once but three times.

"I thought I might get a bronze for this home!" Kevin laughs. "And then when they read out that I won the Craftsmanship Award also, I was staggered. Then later when they read out the Supreme awards and said K2 Builders, I was just shocked. In the photos I looked like a stunned mullet!"

Mr O'Grady says the special part of the win was that he had his foreman, workers and client with him, and they could all go up on stage. "The crew and I put a lot into that job, so it was really cool to be able to celebrate it with them."

The beautiful Waiheke Island home was the first-ever entry into the competition for K2 Builders. The challenging build, sitting on a hill right over the bay, totally exposed to the elements from the north-east, required ongoing collaboration between the designer and build team.

"The build was an intricate process. We would create mock-ups of the weathertight junctions along the way to make sure everything was going to work. So it was a lot of problem solving, which I love."

The home impressed the judges, who said it set the standard for excellent craftsmanship.

"Nestled on the side of a hill with views of the harbour, this home has been cleverly designed to take advantage of the surrounding environment," they said.

"The home is made up of several pods connected by a central hallway. Different timbers and finishes are meticulous in the ceilings, walls and floors. The exterior cedar cladding has been carefully fixed over a waterproof wall structure, well suited to the extreme weather conditions.

"This is a beautiful home worthy of the Supreme Award, taking a simple design and elevating it to a high art with remarkable attention to detail," they said.



K2 Builders won the Supreme Award and Auckland Registered Master Builders 2015 House of the Year, the Gold Award and Category Winner of the Westpac New Home over \$2 million, and the Craftsmanship Award for a home on Waiheke Island.



Mr O'Grady says taking part in the competition has given him a lot of confidence in his work.

"Not in an arrogant way, but in a way where I feel like we're on the right track," he says.

"The exposure you get from the competition is just outstanding. We're able to put the awards up online now, and they really strengthen what we're doing well."

Mr O'Grady became a Registered Master Builder four years ago, and says there's a range of benefits from joining.

"I joined the association because of the fantastic resources, the networking opportunities and the support," he says.

"When you're running a company you can feel

quite isolated, you're out there on your own. Being part of an association gives you that reassurance. As the industry continues to change, I felt that I needed to be part of an organisation that would help me keep up to date with the changes.

K2 Builders is now a Gold Reserve finalist for the Registered Master Builders 2015 House of the Year award, and will be re-judged before the national event in November.

The Awards are made possible through the support of PlaceMakers, Master Build Services, James Hardie, GIB, Nulook, SafetyMate, Carters, ITM, Plumbing World, Resene, Westpac and Mitre 10.



SkyCity welcomes Japanese masterpiece

Located on the ground floor of the SkyCity Grand Hotel on Auckland's Federal Street, Masu is one of the city's hottest spots to dine out.

But the restaurant's high-end finish and unique design which ensures an exceptional dining experience, complete with a laser beam straightening chopsticks and an open kitchen showing chefs at work, mask the struggles faced by the project team to complete the new city icon.

The project, which took out the Retail category and a Silver Award at this year's New Zealand Commercial Project Awards, was undertaken by the team of Naylor Love Construction, Moller Architects and engineers Xigo.

Judges praised the "beautiful restaurant that has already reached iconic status in Auckland", and acknowledged the team's professional handling of site issues facing them during construction.

Because the restaurant was located in the hotel's lobby, and below the Convention Centre, much of the work was time-restricted, and noise levels had to be kept to a minimum at all times.

To achieve this, the whole site was enclosed with speed wall boarding and baffle blocks. The drills were also encased to minimise the sound when drilling into the column, but due to the vibrations, there were times when construction had to be stalled completely.

"Working to a very tight programme, the build involved the demolition and soft strip out of the existing Lobby Bar and part of the Convention Centre entrance," Naylor Love quantity surveyor Jacques Uys says.

"Expertly managing difficult working conditions with regard to noise levels and ensuring minimum disruption to the hotel has produced a fantastic Japanese restaurant," Mr Uys says.

He says much of the decor and designs were one-off creations personally developed by chef-owner Nic Watt.

"Nic was heavily involved throughout the process, in the look, feel, design and concept. Most of the wallpaper and interior is originals — it's pretty impressive."

Many of the unique design elements may go unnoticed, but Mr Uys says the details, unique methods and level of finish involved is what makes the project so remarkable.

"The glass in the private dining area needed to look like champagne bubbles so we had to adhere individual bubbles onto the glass with UV glue and set it with UV lights to stop it from yellowing over time.

"The plastered mud wall that is seen upon entering actually has straw in the wall — again, this was specifically designed for the restaurant because you couldn't just make a mud wall for obvious reasons. We had to create an artificial wall made to look like mud, so those were some challenges."

Although faced with difficult challenges, Masu was completed on time and within budget, and the team was proud of its achievement.



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Nelson carpentry apprentice wins national award

Shaun Campbell, from the Upper South Island region, has been named the country's top carpentry apprentice, taking out the national award at the Registered Master Builders Carters 2015 Apprentice of the Year competition.

The 10 national finalists put their skills to the test in a demanding practical challenge where they were tasked with building a children's playhouse, to be gifted to a local charity. Shaun's playhouse won the judges over, and will be donated to Head2Head.

Matt Booth, 24, employed by Excel Builders in the Central North Island region and trained through the BCITO, was placed second in the competition. Bryce Pemberton, 22 and employed by Fletcher Construction in Wellington and trained through the BCITO, was third.

Shaun Campbell, 20, trained through the BCITO and employed by Inhaus Developments, won the national title and a range of prizes, including the use of a Ford Ranger Ute for a year courtesy of Carters, an iPad courtesy of the MBIE, and a fantastic range of tools.

The judges said Shaun's passion for building really set him apart.

Converting passion into quality work

"We were impressed by Shaun's ability to convert his passion into quality work, and deliver in a commercial time frame. He is a strong all rounder who scored excellent marks across all stages of the competition," they said.

"His work in the practical challenge was of particular note, scoring very highly across all aspects. He is looking forward to one day taking over the company he works for, and the brand his father has built."

The 10 finalists worked hard over the two days of the national competition, each undergoing a 45-minute interview with the judging panel, followed by the practical judging component in

front of friends, family, charity representatives and the general public.

The gala dinner awards evening, hosted by MC and radio host Jay Reeve, was held at The Cloud in Auckland.

Registered Master Builders chief executive David Kelly says he was thrilled to see more than 145 young apprentices step up to compete in the national competition this year.

"It has been fantastic to witness the future leaders in the construction sector. As construction activity continues to increase, particularly in Auckland, it's a great time to recognise the best of the best in our industry, and celebrate the quality workmanship amongst the group. It's safe to say our industry is in very safe hands.

"Congratulations to Shaun, Matt and Bryce who have done our industry proud. We look forward to watching them grow as future Registered Master Builders, building quality and well-crafted projects in New Zealand."

Carters national sales manager Rob Watson says Carters is proud to support such a highly regarded competition in the construction industry that recognises the new talent entering the sector.

"Carters is committed to ongoing education. As the building industry continues to grow, it is vital that we are training and mentoring these young apprentices to a high standard.

"Congratulations to Shaun and the other nine finalists for demonstrating such skill, passion and hard work throughout the competition. Carters looks forward to constructing lasting partnerships with the future leaders of the building industry."

Apprentices, employers and young people aspiring to be a part of the building industry are encouraged to join the Facebook page at www.facebook.com/apprenticeoftheyear, or follow us on Twitter: @AOY_NZ.

Owned by the Registered Master Builders Association, the Apprentice of the Year competition is made possible thanks to principal sponsor Carters, the Building and Construction Industry Training Organisation (BCITO), and supporting sponsors the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment (MBIE) and APL through their Altherm, First and Vantage brands.

The national finalists were:

- **Jacob Hesketh, 23**, from Takapuna, Auckland, employed by PHD Construction and trained through the BCITO.
- **Daniel van Tiel, 24**, from Karaka, Auckland, employed by Van Der Putten Construction Ltd and trained through the BCITO.
- **Jamie Russell, 22**, from Mount Maunganui, employed by Skilled Building Solutions and trained through the BCITO.
- **Nick Brodrribb, 23**, from Hamilton, employed by Dave Stroobant Building and trained through the BCITO.
- **Troy Matheson, 23**, from Napier, employed by Redmond Builders and trained through the BCITO.
- **Matt Booth, 24**, from Palmerston North, employed by Excel Builders and trained through the BCITO.
- **Bryce Pemberton, 22**, from Lower Hutt, employed by Fletcher Construction and trained through the BCITO.
- **Shaun Campbell, 20**, from Nelson, employed by Inhaus Developments Ltd and trained through the BCITO
- **Hamish Ward, 26**, from Christchurch, employed by Leighs Construction and trained through CPIT.
- **Cale Marshall, 25**, from Queenstown, employed by Mainframe and trained through the BCITO.

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Genesis Energy to trial residential energy storage system

'Plug-and-play' energy storage system to maximise value from home owner's solar system

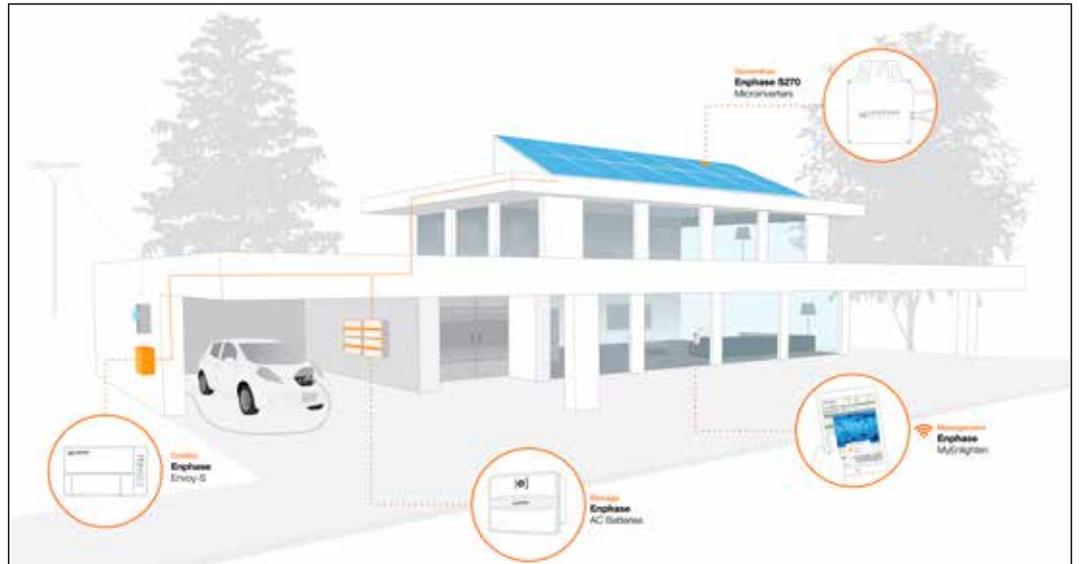
Enphase Energy Inc, a global energy technology company, has announced plans to work with Genesis Energy, New Zealand's largest electricity and gas retailer, to conduct a residential energy storage trial for the Enphase Storage System that includes the Enphase AC Battery, a scalable, modular energy storage system that seamlessly integrates with the Enphase Home Energy Solution.

The Enphase Home Energy Solution offers home owners a "plug-and-play" Enphase AC Battery to store energy generated from their solar photovoltaic (PV) system.

Through the installation of a smart-grid ready Enphase Envoy-S Metered gateway, users can monitor and manage their home energy consumption through web-enabled devices, and rightsize their energy storage system to maximise the value of their energy from the owner's solar system.

"Enphase is delighted to be working with Genesis Energy for our inaugural trial in New Zealand," Enphase storage product line director Greg Wolfson says.

"As an integrated energy retailer, Genesis Energy is well placed to build on its unique mix of skills and services to deliver solar options to the New Zealand market. This includes storage solutions, which Genesis Energy views as a



The Enphase Home Energy Solution.

progressive step towards offering their customers versatile energy solutions."

Genesis Energy chief executive Albert Brantley says the trial is another step forward in implementing the company's strategy of delivering simple and smart energy solutions and services.

Genesis Energy supplies electricity from thermal and renewable power stations. It has more than nine years' experience in the solar PV space with its solar schools initiative, and is a significant energy retailer supplying electricity, natural gas and LPG to more than

630,000 customers across the country.

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Bunnings delivers record performance

Bunnings, the leading retailer of home improvement and outdoor living products in Australia and New Zealand, announced a record result for its New Zealand business in the 2015 financial year.

The business reported sales of \$899 million for the year, an increase of 10.5% on last year. There were also increases in earnings and the level of returns for the year.

The all-round breadth of trading performance was a highlight, with sales increasing in consumer and commercial areas and across all merchandising categories.

Strong momentum

Bunnings New Zealand general manager Jacqui Coombes says the business continues to enjoy strong momentum.

"The record result shows how well customers are responding to all the work the company has done to deliver them stronger value, bring



Bunnings New Zealand general manager Jacqui Coombes.

them new products and provide better experiences.

"Bunnings has been operating in New Zealand for 13 years, and across that time sales have

more than quadrupled from the \$210 million or so they were at the end of 2002," Ms Coombes says.

"It is an amazing achievement, and a testament to great teamwork right across the country.

"A highlight for the 2015 year was the opening of our first multi-level store in the Auckland suburb of New Lynn.

Significant opportunity for growth

"There remains significant opportunity for growth across the country, and we look forward to bringing the Bunnings 'lowest price, widest range, best service' offer to more and more people throughout the country."

At the end of the 2015 financial period, Bunnings employed more than 3700 team members, and operated 25 warehouses, 19 smaller format stores and six trade centres in New Zealand.

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\$155 million Auckland retail facility opens doors

Doors to Auckland's newest retail facility, the NorthWest Shopping Centre, opened to the public recently.

The \$155 million retail development is part of Auckland's \$1 billion Northwest Transformation — New Zealand's largest transformation and investment project, aiming to turn the area into a buzzing metropolitan centre over the next 10 years.

Project architects The Buchan Group was appointed by Stride Property Ltd (formally DNZ Property Fund Ltd) to provide architectural design and delivery, as well as graphic, branding and signage design for the NorthWest Centre following a previous involvement with the development for more than six years with New Zealand Retail Property Group.

The Buchan Group principal David Thornton says the opening of the centre is the first stage of an integrated development to help meet the burgeoning west Auckland population and growing business needs.

"NorthWest caters to the needs of all shoppers, with particular attention to mothers and families, with the overall layout and design welcoming visitors with the warmth of natural materials and design to create an open and inviting ambience," Mr Thornton says.

"The interior design was inspired by the natural environment of the west coast region, as well as some of the farming and cultural history of the north-west.

"It features exposed natural timber, black granite and stylised dappled leaf motifs and tiles which reference the beaches of Muriwai, as well as vineyard trellises and the rich farming and agricultural connections with splashes of colour and organic materials.

"In line with the area's natural surrounds, high ceilings and large windows invite natural light into the building, and selected materials have been used, including wall and floor tiles to help illustrate a black "washed up" sand look with concrete rendered walls."

Marking the end of a two-year development, the shopping centre is 2.7 hectares of lettable area, including major department store Farmers, major supermarket Countdown and 116 speciality stores — all located in New Zealand's largest planned urban, business and retail facility at Westgate.

"NorthWest will provide locals with the opportunity to meet in a family-friendly environment where retail, leisure and entertainment needs will be satisfied in the one location," Mr Thornton says.

"The centre opens onto a new shared public space, with a town square and main street retail section coming to the area by late 2016. This will bring together internal and street-based retailing environments, and will continue to build on the Town Centre's reputation as a leading business, retail and entertainment hub for the region."

"The size of four rugby fields, this first stage of the town centre connects with this significant civic space to the community which will, over time, create a genuine 'community hub'.

"We believe the end product is a true representation of what the next generation of shopping centres will look like, with an integration of varied mixed use, retail, commercial and dining facilities."

Also planned by The Buchan Group, the second stage of development called NorthWest Two is currently underway, and will consist of 0.8 hectares of retail stores, bars and restaurants.

The centre is expected to employ up to 700 people, and is a 15-minute drive from 475,000 residents.

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Builders deliver knockout blow for prostate cancer awareness

Subcontractors, construction workers and suppliers competed in 14 boxing matches in a Battle of The Construction Industry Fight Night in August, raising just over \$9000 for the Prostate Cancer Foundation of New Zealand.

The event, called Boxing for a Cause, and held to raise awareness of prostate cancer, was sold out, with around 600 people filling the Auckland Boxing Association venue.

All competitors, including two female contenders, were novice first-time fighters who had been training at various locations around Auckland for up to three months prior under the guidance of boxing trainer Bruce Glozier, with support from the National Boxing Association.

Prostate cancer survivor Peter Ewing drew upon an entertainment and building industry background to organise

the event to give back to the prostate cancer community.

The slogan used to promote the fights was "An act of destruction is an act of construction", and co-organiser Mr Glozier says a lot of time was put into getting the fight matchings as even as possible.

Prostate Cancer Foundation of New Zealand ambassador Frankie Stevens auctioned a number of items, including

framed boxing gloves and photographs signed by David Tua, Joseph Parker and Shane Cameron, and a \$1000 Go Rentals car rental voucher. The items sold for \$8300.

Other sponsors were NZ Strong Construction, Apex Ceilings, Watts & Hughes Construction, Premier Insulation, Access Scaffolding, Labour 365, Acrow Ltd, Superior Scaffolds, Aspec Construction, Forman Building Systems and Ewing Insulation.



Organiser Bruce Glozier (left) and Richard Donald (NZ Strong Construction).



Jonathan Rowland (left, Apex Ceilings) v Tobi Hall (Aspec Construction).

900mm Wall Hung Vanity and Tower (Scorched Oak)

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TPPA may open doors for processed wood products

The forest and wood processing industries have welcomed the removal of tariffs on wood products across the 12 countries of the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP).

"We have yet to see the detail, but we

understand that all tariffs on logs and wood products will be reduced to zero. That represents a \$9 million saving," Wood Council of New Zealand chairman Bill McCallum says.

"While this is not a huge sum in the context of a

trade deal worth \$1.5 billion, we anticipate there will be bigger prizes arising from the TPP Agreement.

"The focus of the TPPA has been on tariff reduction and elimination, but with wood products we suspect that non-tariff barriers are a much greater impediment to trade," Mr McCallum says.

"Technical barriers that have no scientific justification can prevent the import or use of imported wood products. Subsidies enjoyed by domestic wood processors can also make it impossible for imports to compete fairly.

"The TPP creates a special relationship among the participating countries, and we are hopeful it will become a permanent forum where other impediments to free trade, such as non-tariff barriers, can be overcome."

The Wood Council recently initiated a research project to get a better understanding of these barriers in each potential market.

Another positive the Council draws from the TPPA is the potential it creates for exporters of New Zealand processed wood products to compete in markets where they have, until now, been excluded by tariffs that escalate rapidly as value is added to a raw material.

"These lost opportunities are not included in the \$9 million saving, because current tariffs make exports unprofitable," Mr McCallum says.

"The Wood Council appreciates the hard work of the New Zealand Government negotiators at the TPP talks.

"Once the agreement is ratified and becomes law there will be immediate small benefits for the forest and wood processing sector. Longer term, we hope to see much bigger benefits."

• The Wood Council of New Zealand is a pan-industry body which represents the common interests of the forestry and wood processing sectors.

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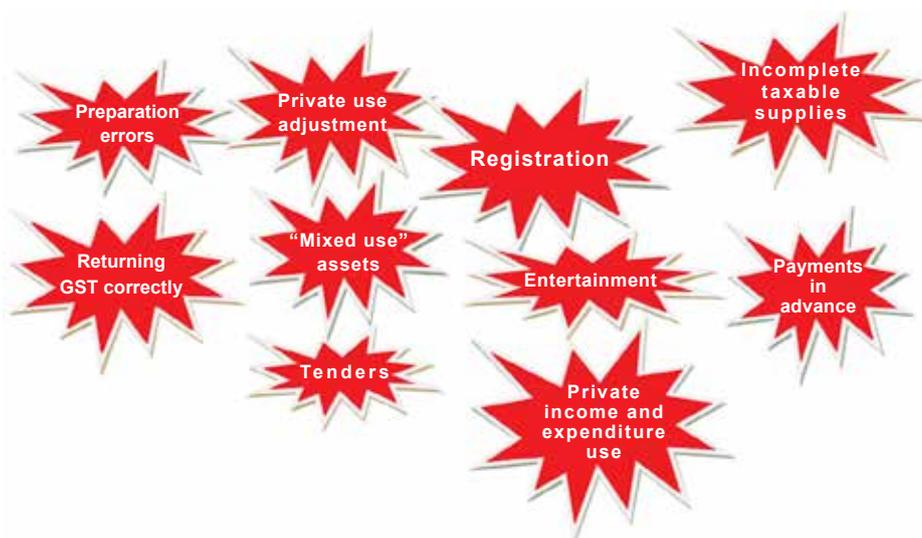


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Good mix design and workmanship keys to minimising concrete shrinkage

A study by BRANZ has confirmed the best approach to minimising the effects of drying shrinkage in concrete floor slabs for new homes is through good mix design and workmanship.

Researchers set out to establish why floor slabs crack as a result of concrete shrinkage. If the effects of shrinkage could be reduced or eliminated altogether, the cost of cutting control joints could be avoided, and the performance of the slab as a structural member could be improved.

However, BRANZ senior structural engineer Roger Shelton says following extensive testing, measurement and analysis of test slabs showed the best way to minimise shrinkage is through the tried and tested approach of good concrete mix design and good workmanship.

"It was noticeable during our investigations of residential buildings following the recent Canterbury earthquakes that, if the concrete floor slab remained intact, the damage to the building was relatively light," Mr Shelton says.

"However, if the slab failed due to ground movement, repair costs were so high that demolition was often the only option.

"This highlighted the conflict between maintaining the continuity of the slab as the main structural member of a timber-framed building, and the need to cut it into smaller sections to relieve the effects of concrete shrinkage."

The tests were carried out on slabs constructed by a building contractor at the BRANZ yard near Wellington, following typical slab details from NZS 3604:2011.

Friction tests were carried out on six test slabs built on a gravel car park, and slab edging tests on four foundations built on a cleared site.

Slabs for these were variously laid — on a 0.25mm polythene membrane directly onto the base course, with a sand blinding layer, with a double polythene membrane, and on a 50mm layer of polystyrene insulation. Concrete weights were used to simulate imposed gravity load.

The study also investigated whether including a drainage layer under a slab could reduce curling stresses, but found this provided no benefits. This was because analyses of the restraint provided by typical New Zealand foundation details had shown that concrete stresses due to curling are considerably higher than those due to direct shrinkage.

Mr Shelton says that, while concrete shrinkage can also be minimised by certain proprietary products or systems, these were outside the scope of the project, as contracted by the Building Research Levy.

"While products and systems such as shrinkage compensating cements and shrinkage reducing admixtures, and post-tensioning the slab are used in the commercial field in New Zealand, they are not currently routinely used in residential construction."

The full report and conclusions are available at www.branz.nz: SR340 (2015) Revisiting concrete ground floor slabs.



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Innovative uses of timber feature in Timber D

The Waiheke Island Community Library, which judges described as “a lyrical response to a timber library building, and a robust structural yet visually appealing statement,” has won the Resene Overall Supreme Award at the NZ Wood-Resene Timber Design Awards.

The judges said the extensive use of sculptured timber battens on the facades give the illusion of movement both within the building and as visitors move around it, and close collaboration with Waiheke artist Kazu Nakagawa ensured the finished facility is as much “art” as community resource.

A record number of entries was received for the Awards, according to Wood Processors and Manufacturers Association (WPMA) promotions manager and awards organiser Debbie Fergie. Winners were announced at a gala function in Auckland in September.

“Timber is a renewable resource providing whole-of-life credibility,” she says. “There are now so many exciting ways it’s being used — it’s visually inspiring and can be incredibly strong and flexible at the same time.”

Entrants competed in eight categories, including residential and commercial architectural excellence, innovation and novel applications of wood.

Innovative uses of plywood were explored in entries across the competition, with the Exterior Innovation and Infrastructure category won by an architectural research project by Mark Southcombe of Southcombe Architects.

Now being developed for commercial manufacture, complex design and precision CNC cutting technology were used to deliver layered plywood panels with random leaf-shaped cutouts, producing shadows suggesting the dappled light found under summer trees.

Trees were used as inspiration for shading and decorative panels in two Auckland Council library entries. The Waiheke Island Community Library won the Commercial Architectural Excellence category, with the Devonport Library as joint runner-up. Both make extensive use of glulam and other engineered timber.

The design inspiration for the Waiheke Library was taken from the grove of large pohutukawa trees on the site, with the library’s interior giving the illusion of sitting under a pohutukawa forest.

This was achieved with perforated ceiling

panels referencing its leaves, and engineered timber trusses the branches. The large roof canopy is further supported on “tree trunks” of shaved poles, and interior screens repeat the leaf patterns.

Modern library pavilion and park setting concepts were referenced for the Devonport design, complementing the marine and historical aspects of the suburb. The double height veranda is a glulam portal frame above which is timber “fretwork” solar screening. It was placed in the international Public Library of the Year Award in August.

In the Novel Application of Timber Award, the winning Beach Barn in New Brighton used a number of wood-based materials along with modern structural systems to provide “a healthy and energy efficient indoor environment . . . (that is) available to the public at realistic prices,” according to the judges.

Plywood was also used successfully in the Residential Architectural Excellence category, although the winning Maiatutu Road Residence

in Pongakawa used Victorian ash flooring, walnut cabinetry and Fijian kauri jambs and architraves to create “a truly excellent example of architecture . . . conceived, detailed and constructed (to showcase) the versatility of timber,” the judges said.

The highly commended Easterbrook House in Titirangi, in contrast, used exposed glulam beams and plywood walls, ceilings and soffits set off by brightly coloured cabinetry and fittings.

In the new category of Engineering Innovation, joint winners Wynn Williams House and Trimble Navigation offices are both Christchurch entries. The case for timber buildings in Canterbury is particularly strong, since at approximately 50% of the total mass of concrete and steel for equivalent strength they provide especially compelling arguments for building on unstable or friable soils.

The Trimble Navigation office building used post-tensioned timber frames and walls. By using replaceable energy dissipaters,



Above: The Waiheke Island Community Library won the Resene Overall Supreme Award at the NZ Wood-Resene Timber Design Awards.

Right: The Trimble Navigation offices in Christchurch were joint winners with another Christchurch entry, Wynn Williams House, in the new category of Engineering Innovation.



Design Award winners

connectors, rivets and screws the building is designed to return to its correct alignment following any seismic event, and any damage sustained as a result can be easily checked and elements replaced.

"This sets a benchmark for timber seismic design," the judges said.

Wynn Williams House used post-tensioned timber as well as concrete for framing, and included lead-rubber base isolator bearings to produce what judges agreed was an excellent example of composite engineering.

"Exposing the post-tensioning . . . on the facades of the building is a practical and symbolic feature," they said.

ISJ Architects and CDT Consultants of Nelson won the Excellence in Engineered Wood Products category for their Upper Queen Street development in Richmond, Nelson.

As well as winning here, it gained a Merit Award in the Property Council of NZ Awards, and is shortlisted at the World Architecture Festival to be held in Singapore later this year.

Damage-avoidance design skills employed on the NMIT building, which used world-first pres-lam technology developed at the University of Canterbury, were refined into Generation 3 and 4 buildings to further simplify construction techniques and improve seismic performance.

"Not only . . . (are) these buildings made from engineered wood products, but wood products are an integral part of the linings and finishes," the judges noted.

The Timber Design Awards are now in their 40th year, and showcase wood's ability to complement architectural design and provide structural integrity to residential, commercial and public properties.

The awards were sponsored by Resene, SCION, Carter Holt Harvey Woodproducts, Timberlab Solutions, the Timber Design Society, Nelson Pine Industries, Xlam, Southern Pine Products, Jenkin Timber, and the NZ Farm Forestry Association.

'Wood First' inaugural award

Rotorua Lakes Council Mayor Steve Chadwick was awarded the inaugural "Wood First" Award for her leadership role in making the district the first in New Zealand to implement a "wood first" policy that facilitates and encourages the use of wood as a preferred and sustainable product.

The wood industry contributes an estimated 9% of Rotorua's GDP, and is the largest direct employer in the area.

40% of all wood harvested nationally comes from within a 100km radius of the city.

"The council joins countries like Canada, France and Japan, which all have similar enlightened policies to promote wood as the most sustainable construction material," WPMA chairman Brian Stanley said when presenting the award.



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Innovative approach drives expansion

The expansion of Registered Master Builders Association company Compass Homes into Auckland is a natural result of the demand for the company's housing and innovative approach, according to director Garry Shuttleworth.

"Compass is very successful in the highly competitive Christchurch market, and also runs a thriving branch in Franklin. It's now time to expand into Auckland," he says.

"Concrete!" That's the simple answer to the question of what makes Compass Homes unique.

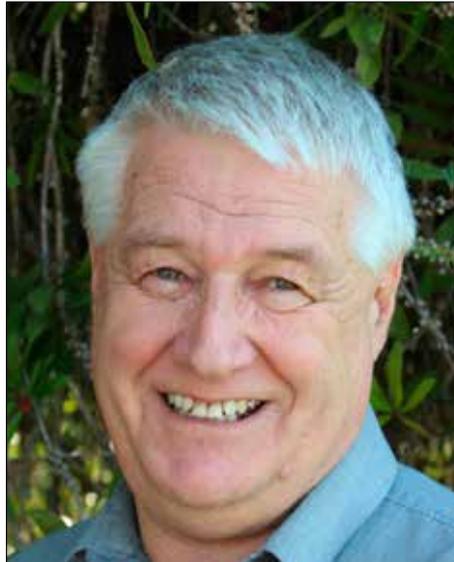
"Compass Homes can build in traditional timber, and can also build in solid concrete, having been part of the development team for this process," Mr Shuttleworth says.

"We've been refining this method so that we can now build standard 3 and 4 bedroom houses faster than traditional timber, at a very similar price point, taking advantage of concrete construction — a process that we believe is better than timber.

"Concrete doesn't rot or leak, it's earthquake, flood and fire-resistant, and its thermal properties are far better than a comparative timber house," Mr Shuttleworth says.

"Up until now, even though concrete has been the best product to build with, it hasn't been economic to build in concrete on a mass scale.

"But we've put together a very robust and detailed business model.



Compass Homes director Garry Shuttleworth.

"First, we joint venture with our partners and bring in expertise to complement our people — whether that is sales and marketing or construction experience.

"Second, we fund the showhome, thereby taking away a formidable barrier to anyone looking to come on board with us.

"Third, we've also centralised all the things that builders would rather not do, such as quantity surveying, drawing and accounting.

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Rotorua Boys' High School — kings of national building challenge

Rotorua Boys' High School has been named the Supreme Winner of the Building and Construction Industry Training Organisation (BCITO) Build-Ability Challenge, winning all three of the national awards, including the People's Choice award and the Best Video award.

Twenty-four schools went head-to-head in the nationwide competition. Teams had to not only design and build a playhouse to be gifted to a local community group, but also had to maintain a video diary and blog about their progress throughout the challenge at www.buildability.co.nz.

Rotorua Boys' High School built an impressive castle-themed playhouse for Kidz Rock Early Learning Centre. The castle not only won over the judges, but was also a crowd favourite in the People's Choice category.

The school embraced the technology aspect of the competition, successfully documenting their progress, and also took out the Best Video award.

The judges were extremely impressed with the quality of all of the projects this year, and particularly the winning entry.

"Rotorua Boys' High School ticked all the boxes in the 2015 challenge.

We were blown away by their project. Not only were research, design and build executed impeccably, but the story of their journey was clear for all to see on their blog," the judges said.

"Their use of video and technology to present their story was very well done, and this was an important element of the challenge, given the high rate of technology adoption in the construction sector today.

"Although Build-Ability is a competition, the real purpose behind the challenge is to get young people working together, whilst generating interest in the construction industry."

Rotorua Boys' High School has been awarded a \$1000 voucher for their Technology Department, a GoPro camera for the school and individual prize packs for each team member. They were also awarded a "team shout" to the value of \$300.

Tamatea High School in Napier won the Best Decorated Playhouse Award, sponsored by Dulux, who have donated the school various paint products to the value of \$1000.

BCITO chief executive Ruma Karaitiana says entries into the competition had more than tripled since last year, and was a real demonstration of secondary schools' commitment to the construction industry.

"The industry is calling out for more apprentices and so it's fantastic to see so many schools participate in this competition and giving students the opportunity to gain experience in building and construction," he says.

Build-Ability is aimed to challenge students, and required teams to have solid teamwork, skills on the tools and good record keeping on blogs. With an emphasis on inquiry learning, the challenge provided students with an opportunity to take ownership of their project and their learning.

Each team was mentored by teachers and supported by BCITO Skills Brokers. BCITO will be running the Build-Ability Challenge again in 2016.



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My Secret to Training Legendary Apprentices...

As our industry grows, along with the demand for skilled trades, it's our job as employers to get the right people trained up and ready to make a difference.

Since starting my own business at age 30, I've been passionate about training. I wanted someone young and fresh to help me out; who would grow to become a valuable member of both my team and the construction industry. So I took on an apprentice through the BCITO.

Seven years and six apprentices later, I'm reaping the benefits.

Not only do I now have a team of guys with the skills that my business needs, but I've got some great mates to work with too.

Finding the right apprentice isn't easy, but once you've found someone you can get along well with, is eager to learn and not afraid of a bit of hard work, you're sorted.

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At the beginning, it's all about investing your time, skills and energy. Being a good mentor means giving your apprentices a chance to excel and pushing them to be their best.

Seeing the potential isn't enough; you have to provide opportunities for your apprentice to reach that potential.

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Through training apprentices, I've had excellent opportunities to foster great talent. One of my first apprentices, Willie de Gruchy, went on to win the Auckland 2013 House of the Year. Bill Harkness (pictured), who's still working with me now, won the RMB Carters Apprentice of the Year title in 2013.

I'm so proud of what these guys have achieved, and it's so rewarding to know I have been a part of their career.

The bottom line is that there aren't any downsides to supporting your apprentices to be their best. When your apprentices succeed, so does your business. Who wouldn't want a top class tradesman to work alongside everyday?

For me, training apprentices just makes sense.

Ben Redmond
Redmond Builders & Construction

BCITO If you reckon Ben knows what he's talking about and you want to get involved with training **CALL THE BCITO ON 0800 422 486.** We may even be able to help find you the right apprentice.



Rotorua Boys' High School was named the Supreme Winner of the Building and Construction Industry Training Organisation (BCITO) Build-Ability Challenge with this impressive castle-themed playhouse.

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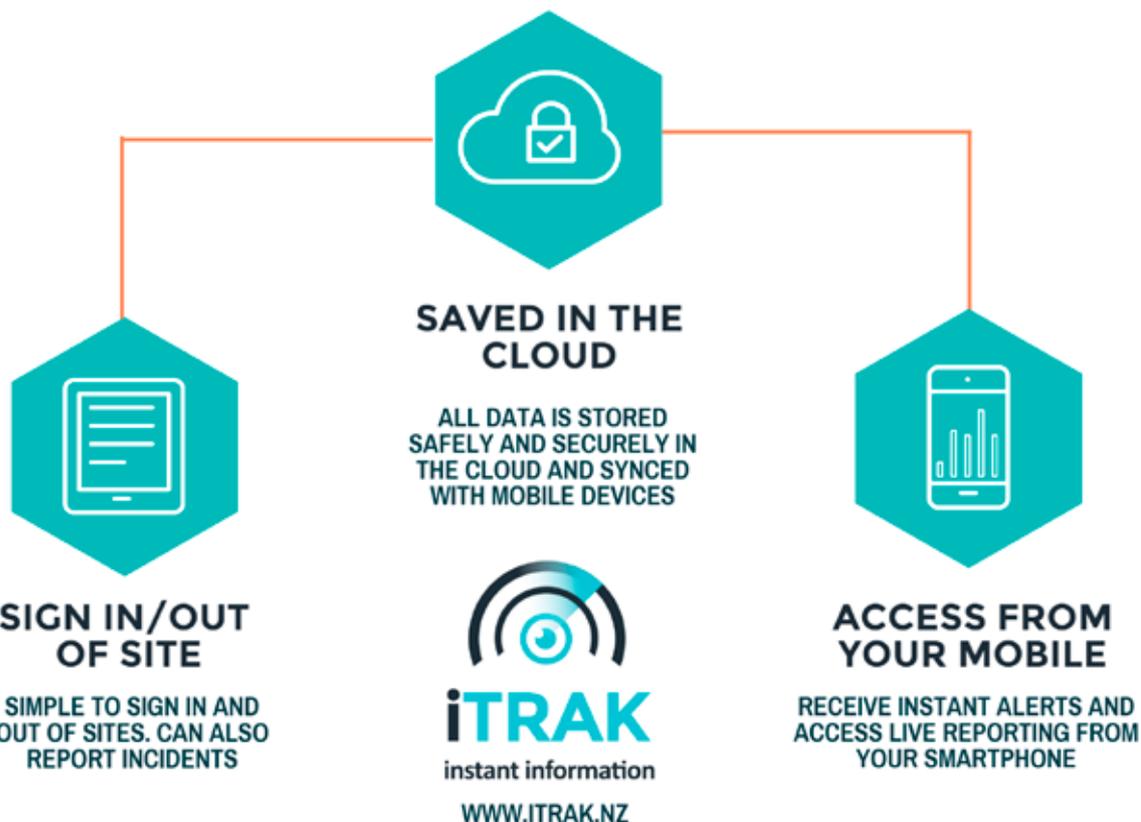
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Report confirms construction laws are a mess!

Building Today columnist and industry stalwart Mike Fox has, not surprisingly, welcomed a Task Force's findings in the recent Loopy Rules Report.

The Loopy Rules Report confirms what the industry has known for years — laws around land development and construction are a mess!

The Government should be congratulated on commissioning the recent report on Loopy Rules and the impacts they are having. It is the first step in realising that something is seriously wrong with the laws we are operating under.

The Loopy Rules Report was managed by a Task Force that travelled around the country to hear from people in their communities, as well as councils, sector interest groups, tradespeople and government agencies.

It will also come as no surprise to anyone who carries out land development or construction projects, or who has had a project completed, that the laws and implementation of such are creating unnecessary complexity, expense, confusion, delays, loss in productivity and risk-averse outcomes that could never have been the original intention.

There were 2000 topics submitted in the Loopy Rules Report and, not surprisingly, 78% of them impact on construction. The breakdown is as follows:

- Resource Management Act 32%
- Building Act 27%
- Local Government Act 12%
- Health and Safety Act 7%

A common denominator in all of the above, with the exception of the Health and Safety Act, is that the laws in question are all administered by local authorities who, given the amount of disquiet around the implementation of such, are struggling with the complexity and consistency of delivery of what they have been charged to do.

Submitters were consistent in saying that they seldom felt valued in their dealings with local authorities, let alone being considered or treated as actual paying customers.

Readers might remember the discussion in my earlier columns about how petty rule enforcement is driving good builders from the industry, and that a full regulatory rethink is necessary if we want affordable housing and a sustainable industry.

The response I had to those articles was immense, and the Loopy Rules Report just reinforces the stark reality of operating within our industry.



Mike Fox

Quite honestly, the industry is not going to survive in a productive format unless there are some major structural and cultural changes to how the rules operate. If these changes are not seen, no one will want to continue working within the industry.

Low financial returns, dealing with a mountain of inefficient bureaucracy, boom-bust cycles along with 10 years of liability is not a sustainable formula and, of course, provides no incentive to stay in or enter the industry.

The construction industry contributes to the health and strength of the overall economy, and if it operates well the spin-offs through employment and investments are huge.

It is imperative that we have sensible and workable rules that enable this massive driver for the economy to work efficiently. A nation of 4.5 million people should not be drowning in excessive and inefficient regulation.

Implications of the Health and Safety Act

The one Act that local authorities don't directly administer is the Health and Safety Act, which is reserved for WorkSafe NZ. Once again, submitters were consistent with their condemnation, especially around falls from height, which is also in line with previous articles I have written on the subject.

At meetings, the Task Force heard from people who have serious concerns about the negative impacts of the current health and safety regime.

They were told of high compliance costs,

overzealous enforcement, disproportionate fines, excessive paperwork, a lack of personal responsibility for safety, lost productivity, and general confusion about how to comply. The Task Force is sure that Parliament never intended any of this — however, this is the real world.

The language used by WorkSafe NZ — “all practicable steps” — a requirement of the Health and Safety in Employment Act 1992, is so broad that neither employers nor employees know what to do to comply.

In addition, WorkSafe NZ's extensive list of more than 400 guidance documents can make it difficult to identify what is actually required in any given circumstance.

For example: the 64-page Working from Heights guide refers to 32 New Zealand and Australian standards, 10 European standards, six codes of practice and 10 best practice guidelines, but it does not state exactly what is required in any given circumstance.

Again and again, submitters describe their difficulty in finding understandable information to guide them through what they need to do. They feel swamped with inaccessible information and, at the same time, feel over-regulated. Clearly, WorkSafe NZ has work to do here.

I have stated many times over the past 18 months that the falls from height campaign has been foisted upon us with little or no thought as to its cost, benefits or on-site practicalities. It has resulted in a \$10,000 increase in cost to the consumer for a 200sq m single level build with no real substantiated benefit.

The Australian Code of Practice for falling from height is proven, covers the majority of what the submitters have raised, and also saves the consumer 75% of the costs we are currently lumbered with.

Time and again I will say it — WorkSafe NZ would be doing everyone a favour by adopting the Australian Code of Practice.

Implications of the Building Act

At the time, the Building Act 2004 introduced a whole new approach to building controls. As part of the new approach, most councils have become building consenting authorities,

requiring them to interpret the Building Code when assessing consent applications and to inspect and approve the work done.

Councils are liable for any errors they make under the "joint and several liability" regime, which has cost them millions in legal actions.

Councils have become more risk averse since incurring these losses, and this approach leads to arguments with designers and builders over, for example, acceptable solutions, as well as detailed and repetitive inspection processes. The situation creates undue cost, frustration and delay to those applying and working under the consents.

Risk-averse behaviour and poor service is likely to continue as an underlying driver of decisions as long as councils remain in charge of consenting and have no competition.

The continual changes to the rules, like the most recent one implemented on January 1, 2015 to do with warranties and disclosure, was implemented with little thought, unnecessary haste and against industry advice.

For example, why develop new regulation for builders in late November — the busiest time for the industry — and then force them to have systems and rewritten contracts in place for a launch on January 1? It demonstrated a complete disconnect from the way the industry operates.

Accordingly, facets of this regulation go largely ignored by the industry as unworkable and unenforceable. This is a prime example of a well-intentioned but Loopy Rule, and one would hope that, going forward, this type of thing will be avoided.

Furthermore, politicians have been quoted as saying the panacea for the current malaise of the Building Act is for builders to sign off their own work. There may be some merit in this statement and, in time, we may get there.

However, the industry is not ready for this. The Licensed Building Practitioner system has not yet matured to a point where this can happen, and a knee jerk, politically expedient response might just create more unintended consequences. It could end in tears, with substandard work and out of pocket consumers being the result.

A more sensible response would be to address the risk-averse behaviour that is clogging up the system and get some reality, sanity and service back into the consent approval and inspection system.

The Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment could take a much stronger leadership position around best practice and cutting out the nonsense, rather than leaving it to local authorities to interpret and administer the rules in the most risk-averse way that they possibly can.

The joint and several rules that plague our industry and drive perverse outcomes not only

affect local authorities, they have decimated the lives of many tradespeople who have unfairly carried the can for errant manufacturers and others who have folded their tents.

The joint and several regime, where it relates to the construction industry, needs a serious overhaul by pragmatic people looking for a pragmatic solution.

Asking a bunch of lawyers if it should be changed is no different to asking a bunch of turkeys if they want an early Christmas. Of course the answer will be no, as the gravy train of lawsuits with wide nets would be cut right back.

Implications of the Resource Management Act

The biggest area of concern with submitters was the Resource Management Act, and not solely with the legislation itself — implementation was a big complaint too.

It is an overly complex area that disguises a raft of issues to do with district plans and other documents developed by councils and the Ministry for the Environment.

Resource consents have become more and more complex with consents needed for such minor things that the only thing impacted is the time line of the project and the applicant's wallet.

The RMA has morphed into something that was probably never envisaged by the original legislators, and the inflexibility of the Act and the number of minor matters now covered have reached a paralysing state.

A recent example of how ridiculous the RMA can be in operation was a builder making a set out error when excavating for a foundation, and inadvertently taking out an extra metre behind the foundation wall.

It had no effect on anyone except himself having to pay to fill it back in. He did the backfill work under an engineer's supervision so everything was reinstated exactly as it was.

You'd think this would be the end of it, but no. The local authority concerned requested the project stop, a fee of \$1500 be paid for a resource consent, and an assessment of effects be produced retrospectively.

The final eventual outcome was that nothing changed, the resource consent was approved and the builder had to pay three times — once for the mistake, again for a needless resource consent and again for the delays while the project was stopped and an assessment made of something that had already been returned to its pre-existing form.

I severely doubt this is what was ever intended by the RMA but it's what it has descended into. There is no space for common sense.

There are many who naively defend any changes to the RMA. However, my challenge to them is try applying for a resource consent with the raft of expert opinions and peer reviews that will be required by ideologically-driven planners, and then see if your position remains as steadfast.

It is an Act that seems to be completely devoid of any commercial considerations or common sense where it relates to a current landowner or applicant, and this needs to change.

Where to from here?

The Task Force wisely recommended 10 fixes, as follows:

- 1** Make it easier to get building consents.
 - 2** Get serious about lifting skills in the building sector.
 - 3** Make it easier to get resource consents.
 - 4** Reduce the cost of consenting fees.
 - 5** Sort out what "work safety" means and how to do it.
 - 6** Make it clear what the rules are and what they actually mean.
 - 7** Establish a new customer focus for the public service.
 - 8** Departments should introduce a stakeholder engagement approach to developing local government policies and regulations.
 - 9** Reform the Local Government Acts.
- And, most important, and the one that the Government can have the most immediate impact on:
- 10** Stop making loopy rules by:
 - developing a coordinated pipeline approach to regulation,
 - including a cost-benefit analysis prior to development,
 - creating a mechanism to actively review central and local government regulations, and
 - extending Treasury's annual review of departmental regulations, and incorporating an assessment of local government regulations.

The work has been done in exposing the shortcomings of the current systems and rules. The challenge for the politicians now is to carefully consider these findings and then swiftly enact change that is consultative and meaningful.

Ignoring the findings of this Task Force or just giving them lip service would be indefensible. Inaction will continue to drive people out of what is rapidly becoming a very unhappy, poorly-regulated, risk-averse driven and increasingly non-productive industry.

• Read more about The Loopy Rules Report here: www.dia.govt.nz/Rules-Reduction-Taskforce-Report.

• This article contains the author's opinion only, and is not necessarily the opinion of the Registered Master Builders Association, its chief executive or staff.

Changing mindsets, saving lives

Specialist Trade Contractors Federation president Graham Burke responds to *Building Today* columnist Mike Fox's column in last month's issue on the real dollar cost of the falls from height campaign.

Mike Fox's Opinion editorial in *Building Today* September warmed up and chewed over the New Zealand Initiative's critical report of WorkSafe NZ's working at height regulations, without adding anything new to the argument.

Yes, some "actual" figures were quoted — for instance, scaffold erect/dismantle costs of \$3980 for Christchurch single level builds.

He also claimed that with scaffolding in short supply, "opportunistic" businesses are telling builders "this is the price, take it or leave it", and "if I don't get a decision by the morning I can't get back for two weeks".

I know of firms who have recently been pricing single storey builds in Christchurch, and erect/dismantle costs were around the \$2500 mark — but it's Mr Fox's comments about "opportunistic" behaviour that interest me most.

The well-planned building project will have fall protection services locked in weeks before work is due to start. If you're in a position where you're ringing someone needing scaffolding at short notice, then chances are your planning hasn't been up to much — and therein lies the crux of the matter.

WorkSafe NZ's practical requirements do not need to add significant costs to a single level dwelling as long as you are well organised and factor whichever fall protection method you plan to use into your project plan.

Many large residential building companies are doing this very efficiently. They plan every stage of a project in detail, they know what materials they will need and when, what tradespeople they will need and when, and what fall protection method they need and when.

That means — if they have chosen scaffolding as their fall protection — that when it is erected they are ready to use it to its full potential. They have the people and the materials in place to get the necessary work done, and they don't need to pay weekly rental for scaffolding any longer than necessary.

That sensible use of resources doesn't just apply to fall protection equipment. Knowing what stage of building you will be at when, ensuring you have the right materials and conditions in place at the right time, and your

subcontractors booked in when you need them will boost quality, productivity and savings.

Failing to plan is planning to fail. If you're a sloppy planner, then you'll likely have a loose budget too and, yes, costs to your client are going to spiral.

An increasing number of smaller builders are very good at planning ahead too. However, a lot of the complaints about the falls from height regulations come from smaller builders, working on one or two house builds at a time.

When you've done things the same way for a long time, then it can be hard to change. We've all heard the comments. "It's the nanny state forcing it on us", "it's not the Kiwi way", "I've been doing it this way for 30 years and my father 30 years before me and we've never had a fall".

The truth is we all know tradesmen who have suffered a fall from height, often incurring injuries which they carry for life. The most important "actual figures" we should all be looking at are the ones that show there has already been a 29.5% reduction in notifications of serious harm caused by falls from height since WorkSafe NZ's measures were introduced.

Specialist trade contractors and all construction workers deserve to know they can go to work and all possible measures have been taken to protect them. Clients deserve to know their homes are being constructed by builders who take care of their workforce. No home owner wants to stand in their garden and think "that's where the builder fell".

We don't need to take a retrograde step back, as Mr Fox suggests, to "just as it used to be". We need the stragglers to take a step forward and drag their mindset into the 21st Century.

Some well-organised main contractors are going a step further in their planning and involving subcontractors — including those providing fall protection — in their planning at an early stage. That can bring a lot of gains too.

You're assured of getting the subcontractors you want to work with, you get loyalty and productivity advantages because they have also been able to plan for the work, and subcontractors can often also offer simple

strategies to save the main contractor time and money.

Well planned projects progress efficiently and systematically, and are more likely to be finished ahead of time with cost savings to the main contractor and, just as important, to the home owner.

Mike Fox replies:

Given that Mr Burke, along with other scaffolding members of the Specialists Trade Association have been financial beneficiaries of this regime, their response to my column comes as little surprise.

I find the response to be high on emotion, low on fact, condescending to builders and zealously protective of the current regime. This is entirely understandable when, through regulation, they have been delivered a gold rush, so why would they want anything to change, or to look at more cost effective or productive alternatives?

Not for one minute have I ever espoused that builders take risks or put their subtrades at risk. Safety on projects is paramount, but not at an unlimited cost.

What I have consistently said is that a full cost-benefit analysis should have been done before such large costs are placed upon the industry and the consumer.

When housing affordability is one of the biggest hurdles facing the home owner, adding another \$10,000 to the cost of a new 200sq m single-level home should not have been done without proper due consideration.

All my comments are based on facts and actual real experiences of builders who operate at all levels within the industry. If you read my column on page 26 in this month's issue on the Loopy Rules Report, you will see that the very regime that Mr Burke says brings us into the 20th Century is, not surprisingly, singled out by the Loopy Rules Task Force as a vague, bureaucratic, unworkable mess.

The safe, cost-effective way forward is for WorkSafeNZ to adopt the Australian code of practice for falling from height. This will give clarity as to what is required, reduce costs by

Continued page 29

BT's Back in Time

20 years ago:

- Membership of the New Zealand Master Builders Federation was set to increase by at least 10% as a result of the television advertising campaign and the automatic provision of a five-year workmanship guarantee on new homes built by members.

15 years ago:

- The demise of Auckland builder Goodall ABL caused the loss of 100 jobs, cost the industry \$135 million in turnover, and resulted in a \$35 million loss for unsecured creditors.

Auckland disputes arbitrator Geoff Bayley said the third tier of labour contractors was now going into insolvency as a result of the company's liquidation.

10 years ago:

- The building industry must not be regarded as a cash cow for local government, Construction Industry Council chairman John Pfahlert said. He said proposals by the Auckland Regional Council to impose a special levy of \$5000 on each new dwelling in a subdivision to pay for rail commuter transport was outrageous.

"Should the council try and implement it they can expect a robust reaction from the industry as a whole," Mr Pfahlert said.

5 years ago:

- A decade on from its commissioning, sections of the \$10 million Southland Stadium in Invercargill had to be rebuilt following the collapse of the section of roof covering its community courts and reported damage to its structural integrity.

From page 28

up to 75% and yet still deliver protection for those working at height.

There is nothing to stop builders from deciding to undertake further measures as Mr Burke suggests, and I would applaud them if that is right for their business.

Mr Burke telling us that this regime is justified because claim numbers have reduced by 29.5% is meaningless without giving actual numbers and what it has cost.

For example, there were 198 fall-related claims on residential work and no fatalities in 2014 — so that translates into hundreds of millions of dollars of expenditure to avert 58 fall-related claims. An actual claim equates to having to take a week off work.

In that same period there were 10,000 falls and 76 fatalities that were non-work related falls around the home. Imagine if those same funds were put into reducing accidents in that area what the reduction might be — some 3000 at a quick count!

Fortunately the New Zealand Institute of Economic Research is carrying out a full study on the costs and implications of the current falls from height regime.

Many keenly await the outcome of this which should be available before year end. We will then finally have an authoritative independent yardstick to measure the value and effectiveness of the falls from height regime.

This will provide both sides of the argument with the facts and accurate data that have been so sorely missing from the inception of this campaign.

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Questions to ask when considering insulation options

Insulation acts in two ways — in winter, it's like a blanket that keeps buildings warm, and in summer, it's like the walls of a chilly bin, keeping buildings cool. Heating or cooling an un-insulated building is like trying to fill a bath with water, but not putting in the plug.

As insulated surfaces are warmer, condensation is less likely to form on them. As a result, an insulated building will have less mould and mildew, and be a less appealing environment for allergy-aggravating dust mites.

The thermal envelope is the insulation barrier between the heated and unheated spaces. It is the invisible wrap which protects the inside of the building from the outside climate. Ideally it should be continuous, have no gaps and have a minimum of weak points around things such as windows, doors, skylights, ceiling fans, downlights and chimneys.

Insulation generally works by trapping air, which is the most effective method, and/or reflecting heat. Materials that provide good heat insulation are lightweight because they contain large amounts of tiny pockets of still air.

The "R-value" measures how good the insulation material is at containing heat. The higher the R-value on an insulation product, the more it slows down the transfer of heat and the more effective it will be.

Generally, the R-value of insulation gets higher as the product gets thicker. For example, an R3.0 product has greater thickness than an R1.0 product of the same type.

However, using R-values helps builders compare the effectiveness of different types of insulation. It should also be noted that insulation needs to be properly installed to reach its R-value and work effectively.

Types of insulation

Glass wool/Fibreglass (eg Pink Batts, Bradford Gold)

- Widely available.
- A range of R-value products suitable for ceilings, walls and under-floor, including high R-values ("Ultra" type products).
- Some products are Environmental Choice-certified and have high rates of recycled glass content.
- Suitable for installation in new builds or renovations.

- Available as batts and as blankets.
- Fibres can irritate installers, and it is not easy to install in ceilings with very low roofs or under floors where access is difficult.
- Must be properly installed to perform well, and doesn't perform when wet.
- Early installations (eg those done in the 1970s and 80s) may well have slumped and are of a very thin product — these need topping up or replacing.
- Long lasting product — current products have an expected 50-year life.

Wool (eg Eco Fleece, Terra Lana, Latitude, Rockwool, Woolcote)

- Widely available.
- A range of R-value products suitable for ceilings, walls and under-floor. Slightly lower R-values than fibreglass for same thickness of material. Often available mixed with polyester.
- Some products have a high proportion of recycled fibre.
- Chemical treatment protects from fire and pests.
- Suitable for installation in new builds or renovations.
- Available as batts and blankets, or as loose fill.
- Not easy to install in ceilings with very low roofs or under floors where access is difficult.

Polyester (eg Autex Greenstuf, Novatherm, Eco Insulation, Cocoon)

- Widely available.
- A range of R-value products suitable for ceilings, walls and under-floor. Slightly lower R-values than fibreglass for same thickness of material.
- Some products are Environmental Choice-certified and have high recycled content.
- Suitable for installation in new builds or renovations.
- Available as batts and as blankets.
- Not easy to install in ceilings with very low roofs or under floors where access is difficult.
- Stable, long life product although prone to compression damage if stored inappropriately before installation.

Polystyrene (eg Expol, Retrotherm, Poly Palace, Styrofoam)

- Widely available.
- A range of R-value products suitable for ceilings, walls and under-floor, although in retrofit situations mainly used under-floor.

Slightly higher R-values than fibreglass for same thickness of material.

- Available as sheets, beads or less commonly embedded in structural elements.
- Current products are CFC-free but some early products used CFCs, so care with their disposal is needed. Some products have high recycled content.
- Stable and long life product, although can be vulnerable to damage if exposed. Some shrinkage can occur over time which can affect friction fittings (eg in floors).

Straw

- Specialist installation required for straw bale construction — used for wall insulation as a structural element in new homes.
- Very high R-values can be achieved.
- Renewable product.
- Chemical treatment protects from fire and pests.
- Durability is affected by extreme sensitivity to moisture, and protection from moisture during construction is critical.

Cellulose/Macerated Paper (eg Insulfluff)

- Specialist installation required for blown-in fibre into ceilings.
- Has been used in ceilings where access for installation of insulation is difficult. Initial R-values can be similar to fibreglass, but deteriorate over time.
- Chemical treatment protects from fire and pests.
- Some products contain high recycled content.
- Lower cost product than other forms of insulation, but has a shorter life as it is prone to slumpage and moisture penetration over time.
- Older installations (eg from 1970s and 80s) are likely to be ineffective now.
- Unsafe for use where downlights have been installed as it can create a fire risk.

Hardened U/F foam (eg Airfoam)

- Available for installation by specialist installers for retrofits into wall cavities as a blown-in foam.
- Unsuitable for brick construction as blocks drainage cavity needed to prevent walls rotting.
- Higher R-values than fibreglass.
- A 2010 BRANZ study found the installed R-value was less than claimed, the product was prone to cracking, shrinkage and voids, and moisture management could be a problem.

Blown insulation systems making a comeback

By Safe-R Insulation (NZ) Ltd general manager Wade Maurice

We all know that the majority of New Zealand's ageing housing stock is not adequately insulated, and while an effort is being made to retrofit ceilings and floors, the absence of wall insulation dramatically reduces the benefit of this effort.

The key to good thermal performance is a completed thermal envelope — and without adequate wall insulation this is not attainable.

A variety of wall insulation systems have been retrofitted to New Zealand homes. Traditionally these were installed by small-scale operators with limited technical capabilities using products such as blown cellulose or sheep's wool.

The absence of regulated installation systems and quality moisture repellent materials put off most consumers, which resulted in very few homes being retrofitted using these techniques.

Expanding wet foam systems, installed via small holes in the linings, gained popularity during the 2000s, but clarification on the requirement for building consents, coupled with bad publicity (mainly focused on the shrinkage of the foam), reduced the popularity of this system.

The good news is there are new alternatives to removing the linings or cladding when retrofitting wall insulation. Blown insulation systems are again making retrofitted wall insulation viable, and there are a number of



solutions available.

Those considering retrofitting wall insulation should realise that it is important to choose a company that uses an audited system.

This should include assessment of the building to ensure it is suitable, and that the product shouldn't introduce moisture to the cavity during installation. It should feature some form of water repellency, a proven cladding reinstatement method and documentation showing compliance with the New Zealand Building Code.

The installation of all wall insulation requires a building consent, but exemptions may apply to systems in some areas. A reputable company can help you through this process and ensure you get a great result from the new retrofitted wall insulation.

Polymer (eg AirCell, Silverzone)

- Available for DIY or for specialist installers.
- Used in ceilings and under-floors. Claimed R-values are higher than installations in place. Available as foil-backed rolls for under-floor installations.
- Can sometimes be installed in situations where other insulation is difficult (lower under-floors).

Metallic foil (eg Silversark, Sisalation)

- Available for DIY or for specialist installers.
- Low R-value product.
- Used in new homes and retrofitted to suspended floors.
- Prone to deterioration and physical damage leading to poor performance over time. Also has risk of electrocution with installation (stapling).
- Older installations (more than 5 years old) should be replaced with a better performing product.

Aerated concrete

- A specialist installation product mainly used in new installations of walls and floors as blocks and pre-formed panels. A pumped-in product is available for retrofitting under-floors.
- Low R-values (0.7 per 100mm).
- Expected to be durable for the life of the building.

Insulated concrete

- A specialist installation product for walls of new buildings.
- R-value depends on the thickness of the insulation — can be higher than fibreglass.
- Available as blocks and pre-formed panels, normally with polystyrene as the insulation.
- As it is an insulated thermal mass, it can be used for heat storage.
- Expected to be durable for the life of the building.



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Insulation strips 'sandwiched' between wood components

With insulation performance increasingly in the spotlight, some companies are gaining a competitive edge with products that exceed New Zealand Building Code standards. Lockwood Homes uses the DP Shield wall and insulation system that achieves an R rating of 2.1, when the code specifies a standard of R1.9. The system is also Codemark approved, so it has been independently assessed.

Lockwood chief executive Joe LaGrouw says independent certification of DP Shield and the entire Lockwood wall system was an important consideration for the company.

"We chose to use this type of insulation because it provides the quality reassurance that home owners demand today, and because it exceeds the building code standards," he says.

"Clients need to know that the products used in their new home will be high performance, and that they will go the distance.

"In addition to demonstrating quality and compliance, Codemark certification assists in a smoother building consent process. Under the Building Act, councils are required to accept CodeMark product certification as evidence of

compliance." DP Shield is a rigid phenolic foam insulation product that is manufactured in the United States by Dyplast, and imported to New Zealand by Nexus Foams. The insulation features foil vapour layers on the outside that prevent vapour ingress into the cell structures, which enables condensation control.

The stability provided by the thermoset foam core assures optimum performance at all temperature extremes that a normal structure may be exposed to.

The product is also eco-friendly. The manufacturer says DP Shield's polyiso core has the highest R value-to-thickness ratio of any available commercial insulation. This means



less material is required to provide specified energy savings. In addition, it is 100% CFC-free.

For use in Lockwood homes, Nexus Foams cuts the product into strips. These strips are then sandwiched between solid wood components during the production phase of Lockwood's home building solution.

DP Shield is equally well suited to foundation and under-slab applications. The Lockwood application can be viewed under System at a Glance on www.lockwoodhomes.co.nz/videos.

Product portfolio expanded

Knauf Insulation has expanded its product portfolio to provide more solutions specific to New Zealand construction.

One of the latest products to be added to the Earthwool glasswool range is an underfloor roll with a wind wash barrier that provides protection from air movement under the floor to ensure the high thermal performance of the insulation, R1.8 m2K/W, is not compromised.

The rolls are 600mm wide and can be stapled in place to provide a high thermal solution

under floors that is quick and easy to install.

For masonry walls, the company now offers a silicone-treated glasswool product, DriTherm Cavity slab.

The silicone treatment prevents moisture transfer from the outer to the inner leaf, which is backed by a 50-year moisture resistant warranty.

The product has a long history of use in Britain to provide a thermal barrier from the wet and cold conditions, and is ideally suited for the strapping and lining of masonry walls in New Zealand buildings.

For timber frame and high performance homes, Jet Stream MAX is a blow-in glasswool solution that provides high thermal performance. It is installed using a Blow-In-Blanket System (BIBS) to create a thermal, acoustic and fire-resistant barrier, and will adequately fill

all gaps and voids and around pipes and electrical wires.

And ClimaFoam XPS board is a high performing, water-resistant and lightweight thermal insulation which can be used in numerous, thickness-constrained applications.

It is made using extruded polystyrene, and has a high compressive strength of 300KPa, making it an ideal insulation product for under-concrete slabs, external render wall systems and slab perimeters.

Although perimeter insulation is not standard practice, it is beneficial for retaining heat and will increase the R-Value of an already insulated ground floor slab.

In 2010, Knauf Insulation introduced its Earthwool glasswool insulation to New Zealand. Earthwool glasswool is super-soft, easy to cut and install, and has a high level of sustainability.

It is made using recycled glass and with Ecosse Technology, a revolutionary binder that contains no added formaldehyde. And thanks to compression technology, there is more product per pack, which means fewer deliveries and less storage on site.



DriTherm Cavity slab, Knauf's silicone-treated glasswool product.

Service includes installation or supply-only

The comfort and health of building users — your customers — is the result of well-designed buildings, as well as properly installed systems.

We are all aware of weathertightness requirements. The right selection and installation of insulation is no different to ensure a building does not leak energy, is comfortable and healthy to live in.

Eco Insulation has grown and developed since the brand's inception in 2000. Operating in most main centres of New Zealand, the company offers the building sector a wide range of solutions to ensure new buildings perform as planned, as well as improving the performance of existing buildings.

The New Zealand Building Code requirements for insulation is low by world standards. Improving building performance does not dramatically increase the cost of projects.

Eco Insulation's services include supply and installation of insulation, or as a supply-only service covering our range of products.

EcoFleece is a sheep's wool/polyester blend (BRANZ Appraised) range for discerning customers requiring natural fibres and a product made here in New Zealand using recycled sheep's wool.

Earthwool Glasswool from Knauf Insulation provides high quality, world class glasswool insulation rivalling some of the traditional glasswool options.

Jet Stream MAX is a blown glasswool for high



performance homes, and ClimaFoam XPS is used for on-slab, under-slab, in-slab and specific applications.

Contact us to discuss your projects. We are happy to assist you to improve the performance of your buildings without blowing

the budget.

We offer alternatives that are cost effective and high quality. And remember, our services include supply only if you wish to install yourself, or as a professional supply and install service.

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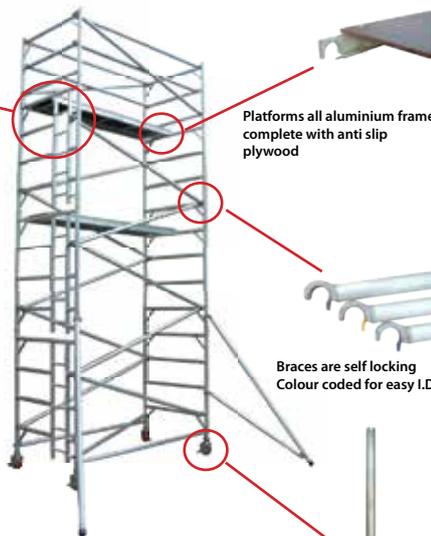
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Building suppliers potentially liable to end users in negligence/Consumer Guarantees Act 1993

Timothy Bates, principal of Auckland law firm Legal Vision, summarises the key findings contained in the Court of Appeal decision in the case of *Carter Holt Harvey v Ministry of Education*.

Facts

Many schools located around New Zealand owned or administered by the Ministry of Education have been affected by weathertightness issues.

The Ministry filed a product liability claim in the High Court against four manufacturers of products used for the construction of school buildings, including Carter Holt Harvey Ltd (CHH).

Plywood cladding sheets (Shadowclad) were used in the construction of these schools. It was claimed by the Ministry of Education that this cladding system was inherently defective, and has caused damage because Shadowclad allows water to enter, particularly when it is installed without a cavity behind it.

These proceedings concern an unsuccessful attempt by CHH to strike out claims based upon negligence, negligent misstatement and the Consumer Guarantees Act 1993 in the High Court. This was appealed to the Court of Appeal.

CHH's liability for negligence

It was alleged by the Ministry that CHH owed it a duty of care in designing, manufacturing and supplying the cladding sheets and cladding systems which were used on the school buildings. CHH denied a duty was owed.

The Court of Appeal applied a two-stage test, first looking at factual and policy aspects of the relationship between the parties, following which the second stage looked at external considerations.



As part of the stage 1 process, the Court of Appeal agreed with this statement of Judge Asher:

"A manufacturer such as Carter Holt can be taken to have foreseen Shadowclad would be used on buildings. If Shadowclad or the cladding system were defective, such that they have failed to fulfil their weathertightness function or caused water to enter buildings, that could lead in due course to a weakening and rotting of the component structures and the growth of fungi in those buildings, capable of damaging human health."

Foreseeability of damage/loss was deemed established by the Court of Appeal. It then went on to consider proximity. Important in this assessment was the dismissal of CHH's main argument that the chain of contracts resulting in the supply of Shadowclad ought to control the allocation of risk for damage, rather than any tortious obligation imposed.

In particular, CHH was relying upon the decision of *Rolls Royce NZ Ltd v CHH*. The Court of Appeal was not attracted to such an argument, and concluded that the *Rolls Royce* decision was distinguishable and the contractual chain argument would not, in this instance, preclude CHH owing a duty to an end consumer to manufacture its product carefully.

The Court of Appeal also rejected CHH's other main argument to the effect that since CHH, as

a building product manufacturer, was not subject to the impact of regulation by the Building Act 2004, its predecessors and the Building Codes issued thereunder, the absence of legislative contemplation of duties upon a manufacturer in this area weighed against the requisite proximity existing for a duty of care to apply in negligence.

Whilst the Court of Appeal agreed it was a factor to weigh up in assessing whether a duty of care ought to be imposed, it ruled it was not decisive.

Overall, the court ruled that the claim against CHH based in negligence ought not to be struck out. Furthermore, it also ruled the cause of action based upon an alleged failure of CHH to warn of dangerous features in the Shadowclad product also survived the strike out application, as did the causes of action brought pursuant to the Consumer Guarantees Act 1993.

However, the cause of action based upon negligent misstatement by CHH as to inaccurate statements made about the cladding system was struck out by the Court of Appeal, because the Ministry was not able to establish reliance upon these statements by the Ministry. This was the only cause of action struck out on appeal.

The decision is also notable for describing as "unclear" the distinction often made by judges and lawyers alike as to recoverability in negligence for damage to property, as opposed to pure economic loss.

The Court of Appeal ruled that it was arguable that both types of loss are recoverable in negligence, as is the cost of measures taken to prevent future damage.

The decision is finally also notable for ruling that causes of action brought against building product manufacturers and suppliers were not subject to the long stop 10-year limitation period as stipulated in section 393(2) of the Building Act 2004.

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

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A glass act

Architect Don Bunting discovers a tenuous link between hummingbirds and glass.

Science writer Steven Johnson defines the hummingbird effect as: An innovation in one field triggering an unexpected breakthrough or change in a different domain.

The example he uses is how a hummingbird's hovering wing design developed over time as a consequence of flowers attracting birds and insects to their pollen by producing nectar.

He similarly notes how the development of the printing press by Gutenberg led to an unprecedented demand for glass spectacles.

Liquid or solid?

A question often posed about glass: Is it a liquid or a solid? The answer, not surprisingly, is "yes and no". One definition of a liquid is a material with sufficient viscosity to flow within a normal temperature range. Those who believe that glass has infinite, almost indiscernible viscosity cite the fact that old window panes are generally thicker at the bottom than the top.

The reason has nothing to do with the "liquid or solid" debate. Early window glass was made by a spinning process resulting in part of the glass sheet on the outer rim being thicker. The pane of glass cut from this larger sheet was installed with the thicker edge downwards for greater stability.

How someone first thought to use silicon (a non-metallic element in silica) to create a transparent material that revolutionised the way modern society developed is open to debate.

The first known instance of a glass-like material was the rediscovery of an Egyptian artifact, a brooch containing a small piece of once-superheated silicon dioxide, in Tutankhamen's tomb in 1922.

The source was possibly a meteor strike in the Libyan desert — the only likely natural occurrence of sand being heated to a high enough temperature.

The unique characteristic of glass is that when cooled from its melting temperature of at least 500°F it forms into a new and unique crystalline structure.

However, the real advantages of glass as a revolutionary new material arose when glassmakers such as Barovier in Murano, Italy, in the 14th Century, developed the formula to

make what was a translucent material used for ornaments and bottles, transparent.

The government of Venice banished glassmakers to the island of Murano because of the fear of fires from the very high manufacturing temperatures involved. They then realised that this new technology was so valuable they should place restrictions on glassmakers being able to leave Venice.

While 90% of the earth's crust is silica (silicon dioxide) in its various forms, it is not an essential element for life in the same way as carbon, hydrogen and oxygen is.

It wasn't until by happenstance silicon was heated to very high temperatures that this revolutionary new material was discovered.

To this extent, glass is very much a modern, dare I say, artificial material — no more a truly natural material than modern plastics. However, glass is not related to silicone, which is a synthetic polymer.

It's transparent

Many applications of silicate glass derive from its optical transparency, giving rise to one of its primary uses as window panes.

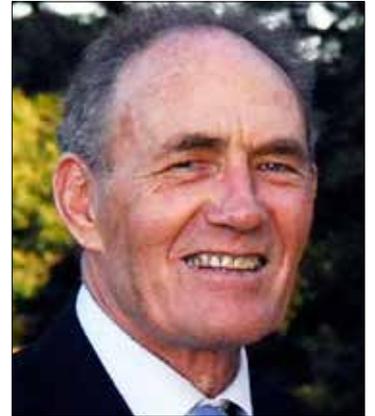
Glass both reflects and refracts light, and these qualities can be enhanced by cutting and polishing to make optical lenses, prisms, fine glassware and, more recently, optical fibres for high-speed data transmission by light.

The creation of mirrors led to artists for the first time being able to paint their own portraits — a sort of ancient version of the "selfie" — and to discover and use perspective.

Early travellers also believed it was possible to capture an image of a building or landscape by simply viewing it in a mirror. I'll bet the slide shows held for friends on their return didn't receive much of a response.

As well as making modern architectural forms possible, the revolution of glass can be tracked by that unique characteristic of reflection and refraction — the printing press, leading to reading glasses, microscopes and telescopes, cameras, movies, television, computers and fibre optic cables.

Today we are surrounded by innumerable examples of how glass has enhanced modern life, from reinforcing an organic polymer to make fibreglass, to home insulation.



Perhaps the greatest advance is the use of fibre optic cables to transfer data. You could say that "light travelling through glass" now defines our modern world.

Strange but true

A Christchurch WorkSafe NZ pilot study has raised concerns about the potential danger of silica dust, specifically from the cutting, grinding and smoothing of concrete.

In one of those strange but true quirks of vocabulary, the university professor involved in the research is a Professor Glass. Go figure.

High-tech learning

Last year I attended a presentation at an Auckland secondary school, held to announce the establishment of a High Tech Youth Studio and Academy, sponsored by the High Tech Youth Network, Microsoft and the Government.

The intention is to provide vocational and educational pathways for students in high-performance digital learning and training, within an age band of 16 to 25 years.

I currently mentor Year 9 students at the same school, helping ensure their developing reading skills are transferred into learning skills.

Results have been extremely positive, with students completing the six-month course showing an increased interest and understanding across all their school subjects. Funding, as always, remains a challenge.

The Government's and Microsoft's commitment to funding a high-tech initiative, showing young people that computers and technology are more than a source of entertainment and social interaction, is a really positive step.

Don't be sceptical about change!

Terry Sage of Trades Coaching New Zealand relates a story about some special clients who have turned their long-standing business around.

I am going to tell you a story this month, a true story about one of my clients. Normally I am very careful when I talk about clients, although I do use client examples often when coaching, but not complete stories and never names.

But these guys are special, and are an example of what to do and what not to do. They are not involved in construction which, luckily, means they won't even know I have used them — but they are a trades-based company.

Their history is a long one — the company has been established for 30 years, and it's always been located in a small town of 6000 with a surrounding catchment area of around another 5000.

The current owners bought the business 12 years ago. He is the tradesman, and she runs the administrative side. They have a staff of 13, and for the past six months have had record turnover. But it has not always been this way, and I want to outline how they got to this point, and whether they could they have got there sooner.

Seven years ago I got a call from their accountant asking me to see them (this, in itself, is strange as accountants think they are business coaches, but don't get me started on that topic).

The business had slowed down due to the recession starting to bite, creditors were creeping up and so were the stress levels. So Thunderbird One lands (in the shape of a rather dated Jaguar — and driver, come to think of it!) and the rescue mission starts.

We went through all the standard stuff — cutting all unnecessary expenses, looking for new income streams and communicating with creditors to keep the business rolling and clearing old debt. Piece of cake.

Could or should their accountant have done this? Some of it maybe, but certainly not all, and I take my hat off to the foresight of their accountant for passing on the referral.

Now, I say piece of cake rather flippantly, as it was a struggle for nearly four years. There were highs and some low lows, but it is all paying off now.

So, what did they do right? They asked for help, they were willing to listen, they made changes, they were open to new ways, they stuck at it and they took criticism.

What could have been done better? A quicker response time to the changes, taking the easy road with staff rather than the necessary action, hiding from creditors (sometimes), and trying to lay blame for the situation rather than letting it go.

This list could go on, but they are all normal human emotions — and we can't really blame them for being human.

They could have got to the point they are at now much sooner, but for some people, big changes are scary. An example of this is how they buy their materials.

They dealt with more than 50 suppliers three years ago, and for 14 months I tried to get them to join a buying group. This group offered small discounts and a very nice rewards programme.

Why the procrastination? Because they had to pay the bill by the 30th of every month or no parts, whereas with 50 invoices they could be creative about who to pay and when.

Within six months of joining, their creditors report had dropped to current (mostly) and their first rewards payment was more than \$15,000. The biggest plus was that there was no stoppage of parts from slow payments, so more work got done — hence an increase in revenue.

Sounds oh so simple — on paper, yes, but it took a bit of financial juggling to make it work. For me, it was just another small step to better things. For them, it was a monumental step into the unknown and away from the norm.

So why am I telling this story, and why is this client special? They are like 90% of the clients I see — they're great tradespeople with a good business but who are sceptical about change.

Why so special? Because with a bit of push, shove and heaps of encouragement they have aimed at the moon and reached the stars. They've doubled their income with a staff increase of only 20%, lowered their expenses by 27% and have a profit margin averaging 31% every month. Wow!

And this could be you — all you have to do is ask and be prepared for the ride.



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Building Consents Information

For All Authorisations, August 2015

Dwellings	\$848,872,000
Domestic Outbuildings	\$13,115,000
Total Residential	\$861,987,000
Non-residential	\$670,604,000
Total All Buildings	\$1,532,591,000
Non-building Construction	\$79,671,000
Total Authorisations	\$1,612,262,000

Number of new dwellings consented

	Aug 2015	Jul 2015	Aug 2014		Aug 2015	Jul 2015	Aug 2014
Far North District	19	22	25	Horowhenua District	20	14	8
Whangarei District	50	44	30	Kapiti Coast District	12	14	27
Kaipara District	18	16	16	Porirua City	38	21	16
Rodney District	54	74	32	Upper Hutt City	5	14	3
North Shore/Albany Wards	237	277	186	Lower Hutt City	17	13	30
Waitakere Ward	43	55	48	Wellington City	64	29	31
Auckland Wards	171	478	168	Masteron District	6	8	1
Manukau/Howick Wards	116	125	125	Carterton District	4	2	5
Manurewa-Papakura Ward	48	65	99	South Wairarapa District	2	5	5
Franklin Ward	72	42	35	Tasman District	40	33	15
Thames-Coromandel District	11	18	33	Nelson City	23	12	15
Hauraki District	4	6	6	Marlborough District	27	18	14
Waikato District	49	53	51	Kaikoura District	4	2	0
Matamata-Piako District	9	11	3	Buller District	4	1	6
Hamilton City	88	129	63	Grey District	1	4	2
Waipa District	47	43	34	Westland District	5	7	5
Otorohanga District	2	4	0	Hurunui District	4	10	10
South Waikato District	3	6	1	Waimakariri District	43	66	49
Waitomo District	0	2	1	Christchurch City	406	425	307
Taupo District	20	22	6	Selwyn District	92	83	129
Western Bay of Plenty District	22	34	24	Ashburton District	21	19	20
Tauranga City	109	118	105	Timaru District	18	38	22
Rotorua District	4	19	4	Mackenzie District	6	5	1
Whakatane District	5	8	4	Waimate District	1	2	2
Kawerau District	0	1	1	Chatham Islands Territory	1	0	0
Opotiki District	2	3	1	Waitaki District	5	9	6
Gisborne District	6	10	8	Central Otago District	14	18	11
Wairoa District	0	0	0	Queenstown-Lakes District	62	85	48
Hastings District	12	12	19	Dunedin City	21	35	24
Napier City	11	15	10	Clutha District	3	5	3
Central Hawke's Bay District	0	3	2	Southland District	3	13	7
New Plymouth District	23	39	38	Gore District	21	0	4
Stratford District	3	3	1	Invercargill City	9	12	10
South Taranaki District	2	5	0	Area Outside TA	0	0	0
Ruapehu District	1	4	3				
Wanganui District	3	7	10	Total	2291	2824	2059
Rangitikei District	1	2	1				
Manawatu District	15	5	10				
Palmerston North City	8	22	17				
Taranaki District	1	0	3				

Source: Statistics New Zealand



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