

# insight

JUNE/JULY 2018



**Supreme Awards  
Winners honoured  
at Conference**

**Major cashflow  
mistakes**



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# President's report

*From the trowel of Allan Tribble*

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**W**ell we are just recovering from our largest and most successful conference event ever. NZCB combined with AWCi to produce an amazing event comprising 84 trade stands, over 700 attendees, numerous key speakers and some fabulous social events. We had a record number of AWCi members attend a conference and a record 24 entries into the Awards of Excellence. My thanks go to everyone who came along and/or entered the AOE competition and a special thank you to our EO Richard who has worked tirelessly over the past couple of months to pull this together with the team at NZCB.

I can't stress how worthwhile and important it is for all members to get along to a conference event like this. Being at the conference doesn't mean you are going to have to sit in a classroom all day – although some of the speakers at the event were world class. The conference was the biggest trade show expo in the NZ Building Industry. The opportunity to talk with so many manufacturers who are

demonstrating their latest products and to network with so many builders is something not to be missed and really helps develop your business. You can't put a price on the conversations, workshops and interactive panel sessions that occurred during this event.

The AWCi Executive will be carefully discussing feedback from the event but whatever shape next year's conference looks like I really encourage you to take advantage of these events as they are worth the investment.

Coming up shortly in late July will be the AWCi Annual General Meeting. If you have any issues you want the Executive to be aware of or discuss at this meeting, please feel free to come along or send your motion into the Executive office for discussion.

There has been plenty happening in the industry over the past few months. The issues with Fletcher Building plus other construction companies being ordered to pay millions of dollars in compensation on poor workmanship show the need for all of us to ensure our processes are robust and we

prepare as well as we can for a 'rainy day'. The more you can work "on" your business, rather than "in" it is the best prevention for future issues and to foresee where growth might come from.

Coming up shortly you will see some information for the next series of our regional member meetings which again I encourage you to support. We will be making these events enjoyable and social with activities like beer or whiskey tasting to set the scene. We want members to interact and network with other members in a relaxed environment so look out for the dates to be released shortly. These events are always good to share your challenges and give the opportunity for members to discuss business issues and how to work around them.

All in all, it is great to see the continued growth of the Association as we welcome several new members over the last month and I really look forward to seeing you all at our regional meetings.

Allan Tribble  
President AWCINZ

# Construction News

## PUBLIC COMMENT OPEN ON DRAFT STANDARD

We would like to announce that public comment is now open on the revised Suspended Ceiling Standard - Draft: AS/NZS 2785:2018, Suspended Ceilings – Design and Installation

A draft of the new standard can be viewed at Standards NZ website for your convenience. AWCi will be submitting comments on behalf of its members and the wider industry to Standards on the revised draft. All members are invited to submit their comments back to AWCi via [admin@awcinz.org.nz](mailto:admin@awcinz.org.nz) by Friday 6th July.

## RONDO LAUNCH DESIGN SERVICE

Rondo customers have always had access to the very best technical advice from their team of professional Engineers. Now in addition, they have launched a new 'Design Support' section on the Rondo website which is full of tools and resources that will assist during the specification and tender project stages.

This new section includes access to MASTERSPEC Branded Worksections, CPD Presentation registration, project case studies and whitepapers to name a few.

Visit the Rondo website for more information or to access the Design support.

## ACC PROPOSING TWO NEW WORKPLACE SAFETY PRODUCTS

The Accident Compensation Commission (ACC) is proposing two new workplace safety incentive products. These products will replace the Workplace Safety Discount (WSD) and the Workplace Safety Management Practices (WSMP). ACC is now on its third phase of the consultation process. We would like to know your thoughts on these new products, so we can develop a submission that reflects the pulse and actual views of our members.

Some quick facts on the proposed safety incentive products: Purpose of the new products ACC wants businesses to better understand the link between injury prevention and their levy. Both products are designed to encourage continuous improvement, give access to more "tailored" joined-up services, and clearly link each business' levy to their own health and safety performance.

**Product A (working title Performance Rating Framework) will be the default option for most businesses. It is made up of:**

1. Simplified base levy pricing. Simplifying the part of the business' levy based on risk profile, as defined by business activity.
2. Enhanced performance rating. A rating which gives more weight to the actual and more recent health and safety performance of the business. There are two options being proposed

for its calculation: Model One (Frequency Based) where calculations are based on a combination of the number of weekly compensation days; the number of medical claims >\$500; the number of fatalities in a 3-year experience period; Model Two (Cost Based) where calculations are based on the sum of all work-related claims costs in a 3-year experience period. For more information, see the diagram at: <https://www.shapeyouracc.co.nz/assets/wsi-enhanced-performancerating.pdf>.

**3. Lead indicators (optional).** Recognising and rewarding the business for the other health and safety improvements made. Proactive measures undertaken to enhance safety will earn the business status points. Two points can be redeemed to access further health and safety improvements. The business can view and share its status with the market through an online portal, which eventually will offer a range of other tools such as benchmarking, levy projection calculator, injury log tool and knowledge bank. ACC plans to introduce all these components in April 2020. Components 2 and 3 will not apply to self-employed.

**Product B will be for larger businesses striving to be leaders and innovators in workplace health and safety. It will be prototyped and transitioned in to eventually replace the current Accredited Employers Programme.**

This product is for businesses who can show they:

- have a strong, existing health and safety performance and are willing

## + CONSTRUCTION NEWS

and able to step into the shoes of ACC and manage their own workers' rehabilitation and claims management. High level changes include:

- bigger focus on performance – with a requirement of a 3-year improvement plan to enter the programme
- requirement of an annual certification if the business delivers rehabilitation and claims management services (includes third party administrators)

To see the other changes proposed as part of Product B, refer to <https://www.shapeyouracc.co.nz/proposals/workplace-safety-incentivesphase-3/product-b/> ACC plans to introduce this in April 2020 to all businesses accepted into this new product. For more information about these products, visit <https://www.shapeyouracc.co.nz/proposals/workplace-safety-incentivesphase-3/>

## FIND OUT HOW PAYDAY FILING WILL IMPACT YOUR BUSINESS

Since 1 April 2018, employers have been able to file payroll information every payday rather than monthly. Payday filing is voluntary for employers until 1 April 2019, when it becomes compulsory. If you're an employer, it's important that you start thinking about how to adapt your business processes to incorporate this new requirement.

Inland Revenue has two webinars on payday filing available to give you more information on how this will work. The first webinar, 'Payday filing for employers – more detail', provides an in-depth overview whilst the second, 'Payday filing for employers – update', focuses more on change implications. You can register for these webinars here <https://www.cchlearning.co.nz/events/cat-58-inland-revenue/> and find out more about payday filing at [www.ird.govt.nz/payday](http://www.ird.govt.nz/payday)

## NEW ZEALAND CONSTRUCTION MARKET NEEDS 51,000 WORKERS

New Zealand has been troubled with a shortage of affordable housing, an increasing population and a lack of construction workers. While foreign investors might have contributed to the skyrocketing property prices, the size and skill of the construction workforce is always the key to actualize new development plans. Without adequate frontline construction worker, New Zealand's construction would be put under great constraint. Due to the increasing need for new houses, new development plans and rebuild projects, the construction industry is said to lack 51,000 workers at present, with the number expected to increase in the years ahead.

MBIE Deputy Chief Executive of building, resources and markets, Chris Bunney said that the New Zealand Construction industry is far from digitized and is still relying heavily on printed documents to carry out its work. He also stated that the New Zealand Construction workforce has a relatively low number of young graduates joining the industry. The retirement age of the construction workers is typically younger than the others. With more workers retiring and less newcomers to the workforce, the shortage of New Zealand Construction workers is likely to continue unless recruitment, training, upskilling and further immigration can resolve the issues.

## CONSTRUCTION HEALTH & SAFETY NZ (CHASNZ)

A new charitable trust has been developed to provide leadership of health and safety in the Construction industry. CHASNZ will supersede the existing Construction Safety Council and will take over ownership of ConstructSafe, the safety competency assessment programme.

CHASNZ Board membership comprises senior industry leaders from across all construction sectors and will be led by an Independent Chairman, Roger McRae (formerly MD of McConnell Dowell).

Other members and the sectors they represent include:

- Civil and Infrastructure Contractors –

Steve Killeen (CEO, Downer NZ)

- Commercial Building Contractors – Rick Herd (CEO, Naylor Love)
- Residential Building Contractors – Nigel Smith (Managing Director, Milestone Homes)
- Small and Medium sized Contractors – Graham Burke (Chair, Specialist Trade Contractors Federation)
- Government – Nicole Rosie (CEO, WorkSafe NZ)
- Unions – Richard Wagstaff (President, NZCTU)
- Public Sector Client – Shane Ellison (CEO, Auckland Transport)
- Private Sector Client – Susan Huria (Director, Ngāi Tahu Property)
- Consultants – Darryl-Lee Wendelborn (MD, Beca NZ)
- Independent – Francois Barton (Executive Director, Business Leaders' H&S Forum)

CHASNZ will work in partnership with the Government, Regulators and Unions to deliver a unified plan to create consistency and simplification of industry standards, systems, measurement and expectations across the Construction industry.

"CHASNZ is an industry lead group, working in partnership with the Government and Unions and whose purpose is to provide a single voice on health and safety in the construction industry", says Roger McRae. "We are indeed fortunate to have such influential industry sector leaders at the Trust Board table. The construction industry in NZ is very diverse and through the influence of the Trust Board, CHASNZ will seek to bring the industry closer together and provide direction that addresses the current inconsistency in standards and systems that is hampering improvement in health and safety and raise the standard of health and safety for all who work in the industry."

CHASNZ plans to create a lean executive team, lead by a CEO, who will work closely with existing businesses and industry groups, through the establishment of Task and Advisory Groups. Jon Harper-Slade, previously GM of the Construction Safety Council has been appointed as Acting Chief Executive of CHASNZ.



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# 2018 Awards of Excellence

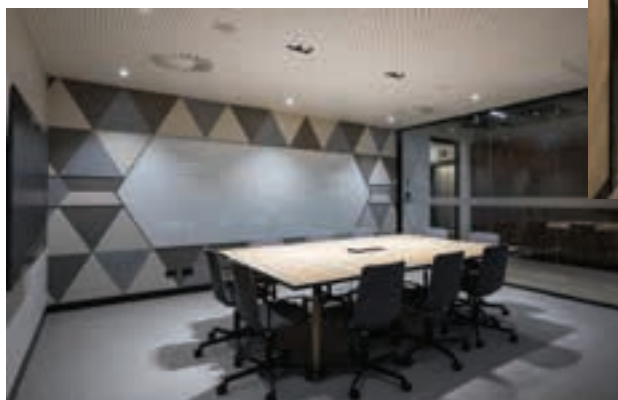
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## 2018 Awards of Excellence Winners

Project Category: **Commercial Over \$500k**

Company Name: **APEX INTERIORS**

Project Name: **QBE Fitout**







Project Category: **Commercial Under \$500k**  
 Company Name: **APEX INTERIORS**  
 Project Name: **Suncorp Fitout**

Project Category: **Residential Over \$100k**  
 Company Name: **SUPERIOR WALLS AND CEILINGS**  
 Project Name: **Barron Job**



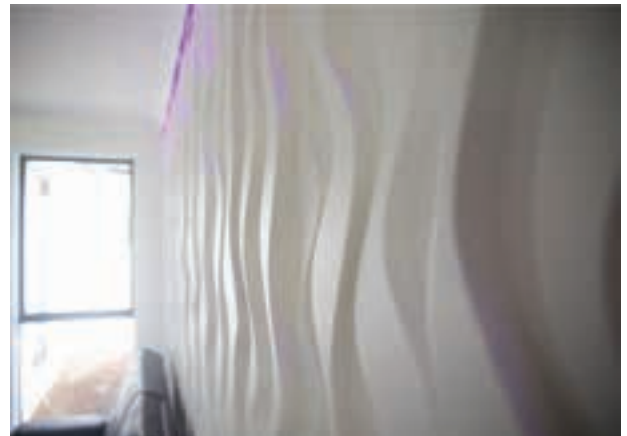
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# 2018 Awards of Excellence

*continued...*

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Project Category: ***Residential Under \$100k***  
Company Name: **SUPERIOR WALLS AND CEILINGS**  
Project Name: Henwood Rd



# AWCI

Congratulates and thanks all the entrants from this year's awards:

Tauranga Plasterers, NZ Ceilings, Prestige Ceilings and Linings, Ceilings Unlimited, Alpha Interiors, Angus Ceilings, PS Interiors, MCL Interiors, Apex Interiors, Forman Commercial Interiors, Superior Walls and Ceilings, Brad McKinnon Plastering, CPR limited.

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James Hardie



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# The 7 biggest Cashflow mistakes Tradies make

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## IT'S A FAMILIAR STORY AND IT GOES LIKE THIS:

A few people haven't paid you or you've had a couple of slow months. Your bank account is looking empty and you still need to pay staff and suppliers. Things are getting stressful; the heat is starting to rise and the business is feeling a little out of control. It's bothering you to the point you're waking up in the middle of the night with your mind racing. Worried if there will be enough money to pay everyone this week. Then you have trouble getting back to sleep again — now you're tired — it's going to be a long day. Thing is, every tradie business goes through cashflow problems at some point. It's part of being in business. But if the situation keeps coming up often, then it's a sure sign cashflow management is a weakness in your business that needs fixing. Having coached a lot of trades businesses with cashflow problems, I see many of them making the same mistakes. These top seven mistakes are the ones which cause the most damage and stress. Not necessarily in this order.

### **Mistake 1**

***Letting clients pay you when they want, instead of when they should***

Giving too much credit for too long can be dangerous and is one of the biggest downfalls for trades. Many have gone broke because their biggest client didn't pay them. Or at the very least, have been sweating it out with strangled cashflow at the end of the month looking for enough to pay bills and the bank, while waiting for overdue amounts to come in. How much have you lost in money and time through late payers and bad debts? The fix is to set expectations right up front with clients, have strict credit terms, take deposits at the beginning of jobs, progress payments on big jobs, and be prepared to stop work if the account is not paid on time. Only when you are paid can you say the money is yours.

### **Mistake 2**

***Not billing everything out on time, or at all***

Often, especially on complex jobs, bills are sent out months later. Or some details are forgotten, so not everything is billed. Or worse, the job is not billed out at all. Make sure you have a good

system for your team to record all details including extras (materials and labour) on the job. Then make sure you invoice everything on completion. Pay special attention to cashflow when your trade business is growing. If you aren't getting paid all you're due, you are going to feel the squeeze. And it's not going to be pleasant.

### **Mistake 3**

***Not allowing enough margin in your jobs***

It doesn't matter how big your jobs or sales are — if you're not making enough money to cover all your costs, overheads and profit on top, you won't ever have the cashflow you need. This is all about quoting the job with good margins at the start. And then controlling it. So there is healthy profit at the end of each job.

### **Mistake 4**

***Not understanding what is yours***

I call this your cash position which is simply what you would have left if all your receivables were collected and all suppliers, wages, credit cards, bank, and taxes were paid. Is there some money left? Or will you have to chip in the difference from your back pocket? Unless you have a positive cash position (money

after everyone is paid), you won't have good cashflow. It's math. Also, you want to be improving this figure over time, so check this calculation at the end of every month to make sure you're on the right side of things.

#### **Mistake 5**

**Surprise tax bills you didn't see coming** Unexpected tax bills (due now) will kill cashflow dead, believe me! Make sure you keep in touch with your accountant and know what is due and when. Then put the money aside in a separate account early so it's there when you need it. Remember it's not your money. So if you spend it, you'll have problems with the IRD. You have to pay it all back and that's stressful. If you are caught short? Don't bury your head in the sand. Phone the IRD and make an arrangement. If you don't, the penalties and interest charges are brutal. Yes, I have seen some businesses who left it too long. The extra costs were almost as much as the original amount!

#### **Mistake 6**

##### **No cash buffer**

Construction is cyclical. In other words, it has highs and lows. In the good times, it's important to be putting cash away for when times are not so good. If you have been around a while you'll have already been through this cycle a number of times. It's all part of the fun. Have enough in the bank to cover your overheads for a few months if things get tight. But the bigger buffer you can accumulate, the better.

#### **Mistake 7**

##### **No planning**

Many tradies wing cashflow and it gets them into trouble. Completing a budget and cashflow to know what money you need to pay to who and when is essential to running a good business. It's an easy template which I give all my clients. It only takes 15 minutes. Think of it like this. If you are in the middle of the road and a bus is about to hit you and you only have one second to react, this means you have big problems. But what if you have a whole 10 seconds? Way more options – you can wave it down, move to the side, or simply get the heck out of the way. Same with cashflow in your business. If you have time and you can see what's going to happen, you have a greater level of control of the situation. Poor cashflow is actually the main reason businesses fail. So be proactive.

If you need a hand with your business and cashflow, book a time with me and let's chat about how I can help.

<http://nextleveltradie.youcanbook.me/>.

Daniel Fitzpatrick

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**T**he Accounting Income Method (AIM), the new pay-as-you-go option for managing provisional tax through accounting software, is now available for small businesses with an annual turnover of under \$5 million. With AIM, you pay provisional tax only when your business makes a profit. AIM will suit businesses that are growing, new, have irregular or seasonal income, or find it difficult to forecast their income accurately. AIM makes managing cash flow simpler because provisional tax

payments are based on a business' actual results.

Do you want to start using AIM in the current tax year?

If you pay GST every two or six months, or if you're not registered for GST, your first filing deadline for AIM is **28 June 2018**.

Software providers MYOB, Reckon and Xero are offering AIM in their tax management accounting packages. MYOB is also providing AIM to their

business customers. You'll find more information on their websites.

Talk to your software provider or tax agent about whether AIM is right for your business. Visit [www.ird.govt.nz/aim](http://www.ird.govt.nz/aim) for more information or take a look at the free webinars on AIM at [www.cchlearning.co.nz](http://www.cchlearning.co.nz)



An advertisement for Inland Revenue. It features a teal background. On the left, there are two photographs: the top one shows a woman with brown hair resting her chin on her hand, looking thoughtful; the bottom one shows a man with glasses working in a workshop. To the right of the photos, the text 'Only pay provisional tax when you're making a profit' is written in white. At the bottom right is the Inland Revenue logo, which consists of a stylized 'i' and 'r' inside a circle, followed by the text 'Inland Revenue' and 'Te Tari Taake' in white.



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# AWCI launch new website and now on Facebook

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**A**WCI NZ have launched a new website allowing greater access to find members and showing some of the great work AWCI members complete. The website is just the start of a range of new benefits for members.

[www.awci.org.nz](http://www.awci.org.nz)

The website will continually develop and be used for magazine downloads (if you can't find your hard copy), industry information and more to come shortly! Put the AWCI website address in your quotes so your customers see that you are a member of the Association.

## Like us on Facebook!

In addition, AWCI has launched a new facebook page for members to keep up to date – Search **AWCI NZ on Facebook** and LIKE US NOW!







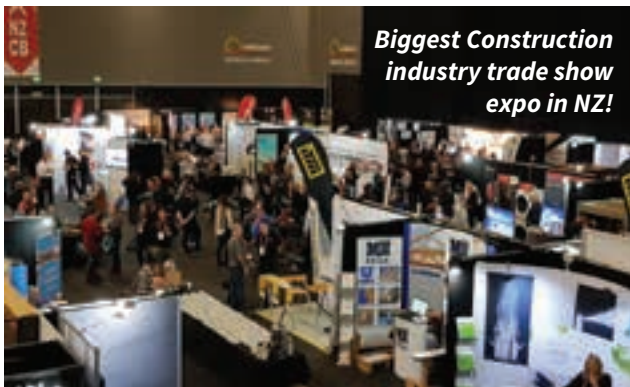
# 2018 National Conference

**T**he AWCI / NZCB National conference was held in Rotorua in May. Here are some of the photo's from the event. The conference had a record number of AWCI members attending along with more than 24 entries received for the 2018 Awards of Excellence project competition.

AWCI also congratulates **Keegan Milburn** and **Toa Connor** who are off to Australia representing New Zealand in the Australasian Workskills competition in October. *Congratulations boys!*



*Keegan Milburn and Toa Conner will represent NZ at the Australasian GIB Workskills competition. Keegan Milburn won the overall apprentice of the year – Erica Dayman trophy.*



*Peter Collins GIB, Keegan Milburn, Toa Conner, Cameron Tipa, Shannon Shepherd*



Warwick Quinn  
BCITO presents  
his workshop



Chris Bamford  
from Apex  
Interiors  
receives his  
Awards of  
Excellence  
certificate



Bryce Clifford,  
Atlas Fibrous  
Plasterers  
winning the  
Neil Gunn  
Award



Te Puia social function on Friday night



# Tradies build dream house for NZ's toughest customers

**T**he Building and Construction Industry Training Organisation (BCITO) launched a new campaign in May aiming to show New Zealanders anything is possible with a career in the trades.

Called TradeUP, the goal of the campaign is to encourage more Kiwis to sign-up to an apprenticeship to meet the demand the construction industry continues to face.

To demonstrate what is possible in the trades, a group of talented Kiwi apprentices had just five days to build one of the most difficult design briefs they will ever receive.

Wellington siblings, eight-year-old Xavier and six-year-old Tui, designed their dream house, complete with his and hers turrets, a slide and a rock climbing wall. The group of seven BCITO apprentices had just five days to make this dream a reality and showcase that anything is possible.

The project was led by Cody Webby, who recently completed his apprenticeship through BCITO.

"The team had their work cut out for them to get the job completed on time and up to the high expectations of Xavier and Tui. This isn't your regular project, it tested their skills to the limits – but they were up for the challenge and Tui, and Xavier were stoked with the results," says Webby.

BCITO is the leading provider of building and construction industry apprenticeships in New Zealand. The build showcased many of the 15 trades that BCITO offers including carpentry, brick and block laying and glass and glazing.

BCITO Chief Executive Warwick Quinn says he hopes the project will encourage more people to consider a career in the trades.

"New Zealand still desperately needs more apprentices in the building and construction industry to meet demand. About 50,000 workers are needed in the construction industry over the next five years, about half of these need to be trade qualified," says Quinn.

"The construction industry is facing huge demand with an increase of 13% in job numbers expected over the next four years. We need to attract more people, and it's not just to fill the typical roles people first think of like being on the tools."

Apprenticeships provide fantastic and varied career opportunities for people with a range of skillsets and passions." Quinn says the ability to earn while you



learn and the Government's new fees free policy which covers the first two years of an apprenticeship make it a fantastic opportunity for people to consider.

"We hope that when people see what is possible that more Kiwis will consider trading up to an apprenticeship."

To find out more visit [TradeUp.nz](http://TradeUp.nz).

**TRADE  
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# The problem is quality

Before trying to improve quality, the building industry must agree what quality means

BY NICK HELM, FREELANCE TECHNICAL WRITER, TENPOINT COMMUNICATIONS

**S**EVERAL HIGH-PROFILE building quality issues have been reported in the media recently.

Even someone unfamiliar with the building industry is likely to have heard about substandard reinforcing steel, cladding with questionable fire ratings, potentially dangerous electrical cable or poor-quality work being signed off by a building consent authority. Every day, it seems there is a new report of poor workmanship or knock-off products finding their way into Kiwi buildings.

## High cost from poor quality

In its 2017 report *Electronic traceability of New Zealand construction products: Feasibility and opportunities*, BRANZ estimates that such non-conforming products cost the country \$232 million in repairs and replacements every year. And that's just building materials. Quality issues caused by substandard workmanship push the costs even higher. Whether the media reports are merely a few isolated cases or the tip of some catastrophic building-quality iceberg remains to be seen. Either way, the coverage has prompted a great deal of discussion around what is to be done. While some of the proposed solutions may be sound, quality can be a slippery concept, and an already underpressure

industry should be wary of implementing a solution without first understanding what quality in building actually looks like. It's like setting off on a journey without the slightest idea where the destination lies. The industry may get lucky and wind up in the right place, but the odds are against it.

## Three key parameters of quality

So, what exactly is quality?

'Quality in buildings can be defined using three key parameters – functionality, durability and performance,' says Matt Curtis, Senior Research Analyst and Programme Leader for the Eliminating Quality Issues programme at BRANZ.

### Functionality

He describes the first parameter – functionality – as how well the building meets the functional requirements of the building contract. This simply means that the building has all the features and characteristics that the homeowner or developer specified in the build. In other words, they get what they paid for.

### Durability

The second parameter of quality – durability – refers to the ability of building materials, components and construction methods to satisfy the performance and functional requirements of the Building

Code for the expected life of the building. The emphasis on durability in the definition doesn't seem out of place given the recent release of *Evidencing quality issues*:

What can industry data tell us. In the 2018 report, BRANZ presents evidence that more than 50% of initial building consent applications had deficiencies related to durability, structure and external moisture.

### Performance

The final quality parameter – performance – is broader and harder to pin down. Matt explains that it refers to any measurable aspect of the building's design, such as the thermal, structural, seismic and acoustic characteristics. 'A lot of it comes down to clients being able to specify performance and understand how they want their building to perform,' he says. 'We talk about it in terms of measuring performance after the build is complete, but to do that, you must have something to measure against. That's where the client's expectations of performance come in.'

However, some industry commentators suggest that these performance requirements are often not well articulated at the design stage or, in many cases, not articulated at all.



### Some measures easier than others

One of the problems with defining quality is that it can quickly become abstract.

Matt says a good example of this is thermal performance.

‘If you grew up in a typical 1960s house that is draughty and poorly insulated, what would you think when you walk into a new build that’s airtight, well insulated and properly heated?’

‘You’d think the building has brilliant thermal performance. But how do you know that for sure, and what is it like relative to other new builds? You don’t know, because you have no base metric for thermal performance and therefore no way to rank new builds,’ he says.

He admits that it may be difficult to objectively gauge some aspects of building quality but says measuring performance can be quite straightforward.

‘For example, ensuring minimum indoor temperatures meet World Health Organization recommendations or using a blower door test to measure air infiltration,’ he says. ‘There are many tests you can do to isolate and measure even quite specialised aspects of building performance.’

### Is more robust compliance testing needed?

Undoubtedly some would welcome more

robust compliance testing as a means to enhance quality, and research already exists to support such changes.

For instance, in 2014, as part of the independent testing for its periodic New House Construction Quality Survey, BRANZ found that 82% of new builds had a compliance defect at the time of compliance inspection. Of those, there were an average of 2.2 defects per build. Despite such telling statistics, the industry may be reluctant to adopt universal quality measures, especially given the additional expense testing them is likely to incur on those funding the build. And even with fuller quality standards in place, measuring quality becomes much more difficult when such objective performance measures are combined with the homeowner’s or developer’s expectations and limited understanding of performance.

‘Imagine trying to do a post-occupancy evaluation and asking, “How is your building performing in your opinion?” You’ll probably get a different answer for every building ever made,’ says Matt.

### Consumer-driven change

While the building industry should take responsibility for delivering quality, Matt believes homeowners, designers and developers must ultimately drive quality

forward through what they require of their buildings. This would be similar to the way that consumer choice pushes the automotive industry to deliver safer and more fuel-efficient cars.

‘At the moment, the information from the industry is quite disparate. We need to extract more data on building quality and feed it back into the design and building process,’ he says.

‘In particular, we need to find ways to educate homeowners, designers and developers so they can better understand how to specify quality using the parameters of functionality, durability and performance and what these mean for their build.’

He’s not suggesting every potential homeowner and developer go out and become an expert in building performance. Rather, he thinks that consumers should be able to expect quality by default, but for now, it doesn’t appear to be the case.

‘The stats tell us that the country clearly has a problem with the quality of building workmanship, materials and performance,’ he says. ‘The question now becomes, “How do we shift the industry from the status quo to a place where it can overcome these issues?” Unfortunately, that is not an easy question to answer.’





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# Room to reduce noise

Increasing housing density has a consequence – a greater chance of noise-related issues. BRANZ research has been looking at what can be done to help industry address noise as part of the housing design process.

BY TESSA PHILLIPS, CONSULTANT, MARSHALL DAY ACOUSTICS

**A** **S HOUSING DENSITY** increases, potential annoyance due to noise from neighbouring activities grows. Sources of annoyance may include noise coming from neighbouring dwellings and the broader environment, such as traffic noise.

## Researching the problems

Designing and constructing housing to provide residents with adequate protection from noise, as well as acoustic privacy, is very important for the health and wellbeing of residents and the long-term desirability of the housing units. As part of the BRANZ medium-density housing (MDH) research programme, a collaborative research project Acoustical design of medium-density housing was funded by the Building Research Levy to help understand this topic. The research aimed to identify information sources, gaps in knowledge and key issues in the New Zealand context. To provide a multi-disciplinary viewpoint, the core research team included experts in acoustics, architecture and engineering. These were from several consultancies (Marshall Day Acoustics, Jasmax, ECubed, Enovate/Kirk Roberts) and from research organisations (Scion and the University of Auckland – Acoustic Research Centre and the



Department of Mechanical Engineering). Three project stages

The project included three stages:

- A literature review of the current state of play here and overseas for residential building acoustics.
- Consultation with a cross-section of building industry participants including an online survey and interviews.
- Analysis to find the key issues along with recommendations for the way forward.

## Key findings

Industry feedback offered a variety of opinions, but the key issues related to:

- a lack of baseline acoustic knowledge across industries
- New Zealand regulations

- access to independent New Zealand-focused information
- integrated design requirements
- knowledge of end-user needs.

## Need to improve understanding

and knowledge Although there is an awareness noise needs consideration in MDH design, there is less knowledge of how to address it or what performance needs to be achieved. Feedback indicated this was a big issue, with a better understanding of relevant factors needed across all industry sectors. This is not only designers but also developers, planners, contractors and residents to ensure appropriate consideration and implementation at all stages. Siting,

# Room to reduce noise *continued...*

whole-building design and construction all impact acoustic outcomes.

There also needs to be a clearer understanding of why residential building acoustics needs active consideration and the cost benefits of addressing it appropriately. Regulations need updating. Currently, residential inter-tenancy noise is addressed through New Zealand Building Code clause G6 Airborne and impact sound. This was introduced in 1992, with the clause and supporting compliance document unchanged since 1995. G6 addresses some aspects of airborne and impact noise between abutting occupancies, but the interpretation and compliance requirements lack clarity and vary significantly across the country's building consent authorities. Efforts to update G6 to address these issues have not resulted in change, despite 15 years of efforts to reach consensus.

Building requirements for protection from environmental noise are provided for in some noisy areas in some New Zealand district plans but not consistently.

Industry feedback revealed a mix of feelings about existing regulations, though only a small proportion felt regulations were excessive. Also, there was a desire for more understanding of end-user needs and what satisfaction rates New Zealand's current minimum regulations provide.

## **Lack of local, independent information**

Although technical information is available internationally, there is little focusing on meeting New Zealand requirements where building styles and materials may be very different. Currently, there is common reliance on a few proprietary New Zealand product manuals to understand how to meet our acoustic needs.

There was a desire for more general, independent information, especially inter-tenancy floors, walls and integrated

building solutions. Integration issues. Currently, acoustic considerations are often not included early enough in the design process to allow effective integration with other design requirements.

Research that helps develop cost-effective practical building systems that meet multiple building requirements is one of the best ways to reduce costs while providing better quality.

## **Understanding end-user needs**

The proportion of New Zealanders who live or have lived in medium or high-density housing has only recently become significant. There is little New Zealand-specific, acoustic-related, post-occupancy information. Although overseas experience is useful, understanding satisfaction rates and performance outcomes in the New Zealand context is important.

## **Recommendations**

The research also provided key recommendations for immediate action.

## **Information dissemination**

The first priority is for more New Zealand-focused, independent residential acoustic information that is freely available.

An online quiet housing hub, provided by an independent body such as BRANZ or MBIE, is suggested as the most effective way of delivering the information. This could potentially be part of a broader acoustic information hub and be a useful repository in the absence of immediate regulatory change and support future changes.

A promotion and education phase is recommended to raise awareness of the hub and raise baseline knowledge levels. Research and development Recommendations were provided for further research:

- Undertaking New Zealand post-

occupancy surveys that include subjective and objective acoustic performance.

- Enabling better building designs and solutions. This includes developing improved acoustic systems from existing construction designs and adapting international systems for use in New Zealand.

- Developing better acoustic prediction tools. Prediction is very important, especially for enabling more innovative and complex designs, including lightweight construction.

- Active review of New Zealand's building acoustics regulations, including clause G6, is recommended. Feedback across all industry sectors was supportive of improved regulations in this area.

## **An exhaustive resource**

The project collated a large amount of information on the current state of play and the information resources, needs and gaps relating to noise control and acoustics in New Zealand MDH. The industry survey and other consultation includes qualitative and quantitative data covering the full range of perceptions from across the industry.

The suggested online quiet housing hub format could use this information to deliver technical information to industry, better supporting noise control solutions for MDH and future changes to acoustic regulations. Information could also be better fed back to industry via the hub, providing a feedback loop for ongoing research.

However, building acoustics cannot be considered alone – for quality, affordable, desirable MDH, careful integration is needed with other areas of planning, design and construction.

For more information on this and other MDH research, visit [www.branz.co.nz/mdh](http://www.branz.co.nz/mdh)

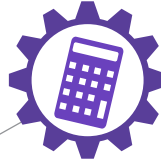


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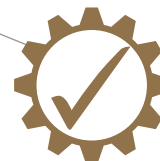
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# Construction News

## THE NATIONAL ECONOMY

Our outlook for economic growth has continued to soften. The effects of the key changes in government policy on growth have become clearer over recent months and we have revised down our expectations for the next couple of years.

A significant drop-off in net migration, housing market uncertainty caused by rule changes for foreign buyers, and changes to infrastructure priorities leading to delays in spending will all weigh on construction activity during 2018 and 2019. The combined effect of these policies will also dampen overall economic growth. Furthermore, capacity constraints from a tight labour market, which have plagued the construction sector for several years, will also limit growth more broadly across the economy, and low confidence will also soften business investment activity.

## THE CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY

Growth in construction activity continues to be incremental at best, with total work put in place of just 1.0% recorded during 2017. Demand conditions have remained relatively strong, but resourcing pressures have limited growth in resi-

	Latest	Dec 2018	Dec 2019
Gross domestic product <sup>(1)</sup>	2.9%	2.4%	1.8%
Residential consents <sup>(1)</sup>	3.6%	-1.7%	-8.9%
Non-residential consents <sup>(1)</sup>	11.0%	15.7%	-2.1%
House prices <sup>(2)</sup>	4.2%	-0.7%	0.6%
Unemployment rate <sup>(3)</sup>	4.5%	4.6%	4.6%
Net migration <sup>(4)</sup>	68,943	60,838	39,230

(1) Year-end % change (2) Three-month annual % change  
(3) Quarterly level, seasonally adjusted (4) Annual total  
Data source: Statistics NZ, Infometrics forecasts

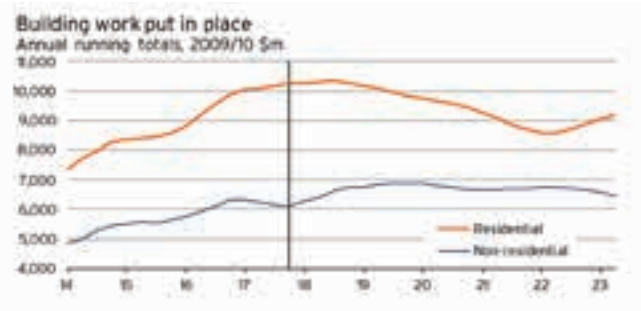
dential activity and created a larger backlog of non-residential work waiting to be completed.

Although the housing market has performed better than we had expected in the first few months of 2018, uncertainty about market outcomes are likely to limit the appetites of residential developers to push ahead with projects. Continued increases in building costs, at the same time as house prices are coming under downward pressure, threaten to squeeze developers' margins – despite the persistence of a massive undersupply of housing in Auckland. In contrast to Auckland, some other regions such as Bay of Plenty may be on the verge of an oversupply of housing.

Non-residential construction has been dragged down by a drop-off in private sector work

in Canterbury. Nevertheless, consent data points towards further growth in activity during 2018 and the first half of 2019. Growth will be buoyed as the industry catches up on a backlog of work, while overall activity in Canterbury will stabilise as the final wave of major civil projects is worked through.

Total construction activity is expected to ease 10% between the end of 2018 and early 2022. But Auckland's housing undersupply and the government's KiwiBuild programme provide upside risks to our forecasts. Further growth in the labour supply is necessary, especially



given that the industry has struggled to keep up with demand in recent years.

## **SPECIAL TOPIC: GROWTH IN CONSTRUCTION JOBS STILL FORECAST, ESPECIALLY IN THE UPPER NORTH ISLAND**

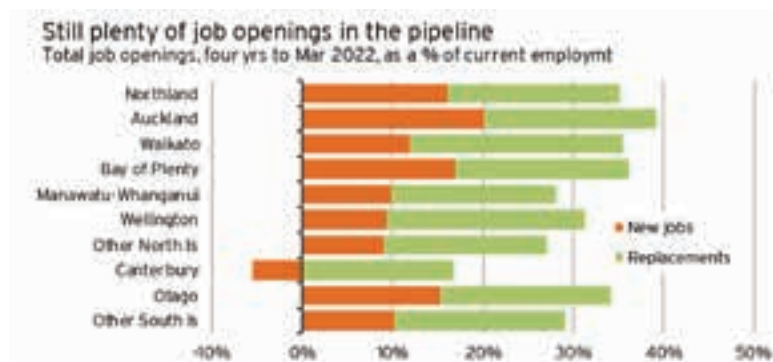
Infometrics' latest forecasts of employment, published in late February, have seen an upward revision to demand for workers in the construction industry over the next few years. Construction-related employment bottomed out in March 2011. But over the following six years to March 2017, total job numbers have increased by 29%. We estimate further growth of 6.3% in the March 2018 year followed by a 13% lift in job numbers over the four years to March 2022.

It's probably little surprise that almost 60% of the growth in construction-related employment over this four-year period is expected to take place in Auckland. The region's housing needs are well documented, with an estimated undersupply of housing in Auckland of 45,000 dwellings or more. Rapid population growth has also placed considerable pressure on social and civil infrastructure in the region, while good employment and economic growth outcomes have underpinned demand for non-residential buildings. Strong growth in the number of construction-related workers in Auckland means that the region is the only one where new job openings over the next four years are expected to outnumber replacement openings created as people leave the

industry through retirement etc. Infometrics' forecasts show that the rest of the upper North Island is likely to continue enjoying the spill-over benefits of Auckland's strong performance. Construction-related employment growth over the four-year period is predicted to be between 12% and 17% for Bay of Plenty, Northland, and Waikato. Catching up with the housing demand growth of the last few years will play a role in the near-term, but growth in industry and business activity will be important over the medium term, particularly as some regions get into a situation of housing oversupply. Although Otago is geographically separated from the upper North Island, prospects for construction-related employment in the region are similar, largely thanks to Queenstown. Strong population growth and the buoyant tourism sector have boosted building activity in recent years. Although the area's housing market is showing definite signs of a slow-down, the economic outlook for Queenstown remains relatively positive, and we do not anticipate a repeat of the slump that hit the area in the middle-to-latter part of last decade.

Around the rest of the country (excluding Canterbury), employment growth of about 9-10% over the next four years

is predicted. A housing shortage and earthquake-related work will be key drivers of activity and employment in Wellington. Most provincial areas will enjoy the flow-on effects of strong agricultural commodity prices boosting economic activity. The government's Provincial Growth Fund and plans to increase central government employment in regional centres could also boost construction-related demand. Canterbury remains the big outlier. Infometrics predicts a 5.4% drop in construction-related employment in the region over the next four years as residential building returns to "normal" levels and non-residential construction also pulls back from its highs. But even in Canterbury, the number of workers needed to fill vacancies left by departing staff is expected to comfortably outnumber the contraction in total jobs available over the next four years. With Infometrics' outlook for construction softening, the risks to these employment forecasts lie on the downside. However, capacity in the industry has been severely stretched over recent years. The unsustainability of workloads, particularly in Auckland, suggests that even if construction activity stagnates, businesses will demand more staff just to be able to keep operating at current levels.







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# Joint Systems Recommendation - Basecoat compounds comparison



*A number of ready mixed compounds can be used as a basecoat, i.e. the first and second coats in a typical three coat plasterboard joint system. However, setting compounds are more commonly used for the first and second coat application. There are good reasons setting compounds are often a better solution for the first and second coat application in New Zealand conditions.*

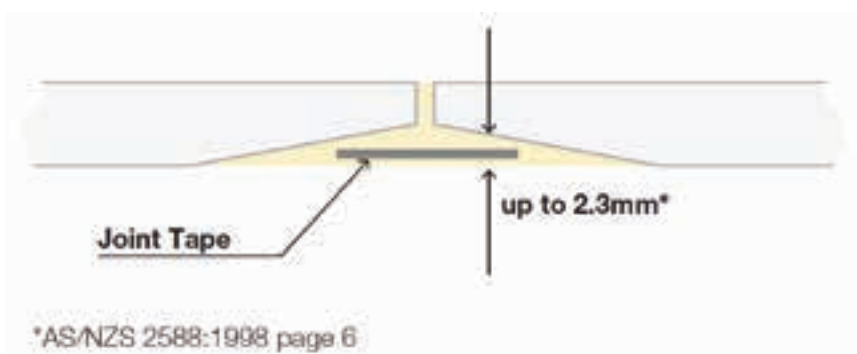
## Compound hardening/curing mechanism

Ready mixed compounds cure and harden when they dry and can be referred to as air drying compounds. In contrast, the dry powder setting compounds cure with a chemical reaction that turns plaster into gypsum (when water is added and after the working time has lapsed), and this process is referred to as setting.

**Setting compounds harden/cure even in poor drying conditions. Ready mixed compounds rely on good drying conditions to harden/cure.**

## Coat thickness

The first and second coats are typically applied relatively thick and a jointing tape is embedded in the first coat to strengthen the joint. This makes it difficult/ slow for moisture to evaporate from these coats and will take longer to dry.



Above: Board taper with depth measurement

## Use setting compounds for large voids

"Any voids exceeding 4mm in depth or gaps exceeding 3mm between boards shall be filled with setting tape cement and allowed to set prior to proceeding with jointing." AS/NZS2589:2007 page 44.

## Time required to cure/harden

Air drying compounds can take a long time to cure in typical New Zealand drying conditions when applied thick and bedding in a jointing tape. This can take more than two days; see the GIB®

Site Guide (Dec'14, p. 80) for a table with approximate drying times at various temperatures and relative humidity.

Setting compounds chemically cure after the working time has lapsed and regardless of drying conditions. Setting compounds normally also create a stronger joint in comparison to air drying compounds.

## Shrinkage

Plasterboard jointing compounds shrink as they cure. The thicker the compound is applied the larger the shrinkage.

# Joint Systems Recommendation - Basecoat compounds comparison *continued...*

Air drying compounds generally shrink more than setting compounds. Shrinkage for air drying compounds is higher because it continues to cure and shrink till it is completely dry. In setting compounds most of the shrinkage is completed within two hours after the working time has lapsed, i.e. after the crystalline structure has formed. Minor shrinkage will continue till the compound is completely dry. There should be no more shrinkage before the next coat is applied. Various problems are likely to manifest if shrinkage occurs to a basecoat that has already been covered.

## **Tape adhesion**

Setting compounds provide much better tape adhesion than air drying compounds. Jointing tapes provide critical reinforcing strength to plasterboard joints. Adequate joint strength is particularly important in GIB® Bracing Systems as well as for general durability.

## **Ambient temperature**

Air drying compounds should not be used below a certain temperature (when applied and while drying), typically

10°C is the minimum. The binder/ glue in air drying compounds will not coalesce/harden below this minimum temperature and result in a weak joint (i.e. risk cracking especially when used as a basecoat). Setting compounds perform better in cooler temperature. They form a crystalline structure and do not rely on a binder for their strength. If ready mixed compounds are used in cooler temperatures it is recommended to heat the structure uniformly (to around 18°C) and especially when used as basecoats.

## **SUMMARY**

Some air drying compounds can be used as basecoats. They need to be left to dry for the appropriate length of time and not used in cool temperatures. In New Zealand the drying time is typically too long for stoppers (e.g. due to low temperature and/ or high humidity).

Hence, stoppers normally use setting compounds as their basecoats to create a reliable strong basecoat and joint. Setting compounds allow subsequent coats of compound to be applied more readily in common New Zealand weather conditions. Setting compounds form a stronger joint and are cost effective. Ready mixed compound should only be used as a basecoat with above mentioned caution in mind.



Above: Paper tape pulled out of joint to check adhesion

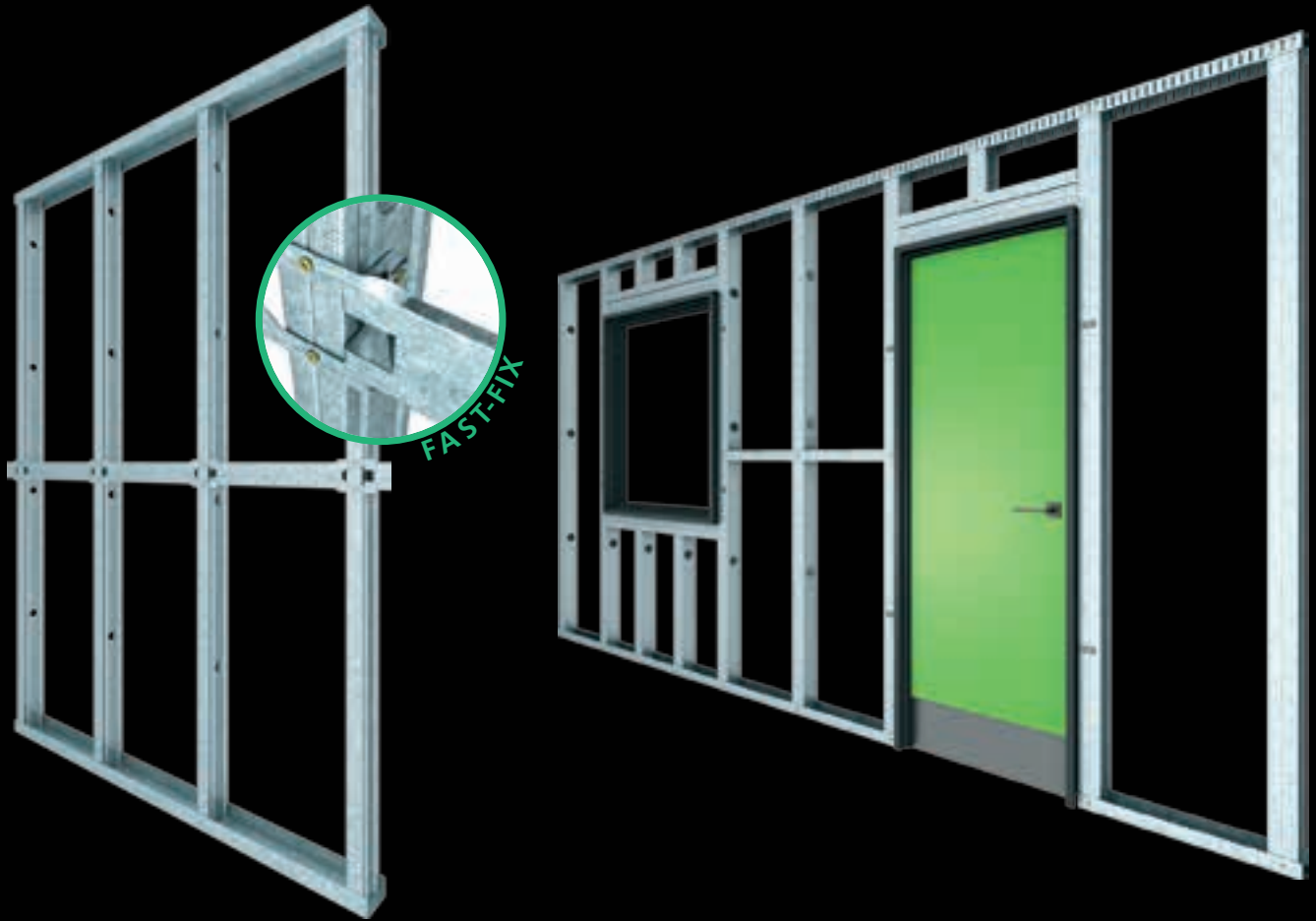
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CPR Ltd	CHRISTCHURCH	(03) 260 1760	Royale Standard Drywall Ltd	TE AWAMUTU	(021) 774 090
Crawford Drywall	TAURANGA	(021) 748 830	Seddons Fibrous Plasterers Co Ltd	MOSGIEL	(03) 489 4688
Cubicon Interiors Ltd	AUCKLAND	(09) 478 4433	Shore Ceilings & Partitions Limited	AUCKLAND	(09) 415 8115
David Wellacott	MANUKAU CITY	(09) 537 7447	Skelsey Plasterers Limited	WANGANUI	(06) 343 6110
Designer Plaster	AUCKLAND	(09) 527 2171	Steel Roll Formed Products	AUCKLAND	(09) 579 0175
Dinsdale Drywall 2000 Ltd	HAMILTON	(0274) 954 594	Steve Gray Plasterers Ltd	TARANAKI	(06) 272 8445
Eastcoast Fixers Ltd	CHRISTCHURCH	(021) 628 903	Stop The World Ltd	HAMILTON	(021) 644 569
Eurotech Interiors Ltd	ROSEDALE	(021) 994 099	STOPIT Plastering	HAMILTON	(027) 230 0070
Field Plasterers Ltd	KAWAKAWA	(09) 404 1517	STOPPING Systems Limited	BLENHEIM	(027) 577 9441
Forman Commercial Interiors Ltd	AUCKLAND	(09) 270 1914	Superior Walls & Ceilings Ltd	NEW PLYMOUTH	(06) 759 9966
Forman Commercial Interiors Ltd	LOWER HUTT	(04) 576 2170	Synergy Contract Services Limited	CHRISTCHURCH	(03) 337 2424
Forman Commercial Interiors Ltd	CHRISTCHURCH	(03) 379 3929	Taranaki Plasterboard Systems	NEW PLYMOUTH	(027) 817 5946
Frankton Plasterers Ltd	HAMILTON	(07) 847 6673	Tauranga Plasterers Limited	TAURANGA	(07) 541 1493
G & C Pointon	AUCKLAND	(09) 236 0888	Tonic Interior Systems Ltd	INVERCARGILL	(03) 215 6221
GDR Plasterboard Services Ltd	AUCKLAND	(09) 624 1579	Total Ceiling Solutions Ltd	CHRISTCHURCH	(027) 313 2369
Gisborne City Plasterers	GISBORNE	(06) 863 3983	Troake Group Ltd	AUCKLAND	(09) 426 7664
Global Linings Ltd	AUCKLAND	(09) 579 7460	Ultra Interior Linings Ltd	AUCKLAND	(09) 271 0595
Gunslinger Projects Ltd	PAPAKURA	(022) 177 0481	Waikato & BoP Suspended Ceiling Services Ltd	HAMILTON	(0274) 945 773
HBF Plaster Ltd	NAPIER	(06) 843 4414	Wallboard Systems	TAURANGA	(07) 544 3721
HBS Interior Linings	AUCKLAND	(09) 216 8693	Wayne Rasmussen Plasterers	HAMILTON	(07) 829 9054
HPIL Contracting Ltd	TAURANGA	(07) 572 5114	Zorite Ltd	BLENHEIM	(03) 577 5160
Hush Interiors Limited	CHRISTCHURCH	(03) 379 6301			

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# Executive Council

*AWCI Executive Council 2018*

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